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THEN, AS NOW.

BY NATHAN D. URBEE.

Then, as now, the woodlands were reddening,
As the blast of Autumn blew;
Then, as now, the chestnuts were dropping,
And the leaves were sere and yellow.

Then, as now, were doves together,
O'er the stony Maryland road,
While the lark in my wilfully hearing hearts
Like the data of the woodlands glowed.

There were sere meadows still swiftly
All, parching, save starring fire,
And the golden-rod was in all its glory
A wondrous pyramidal tree.

Each sight and each sound recalls sadly
The long, long, last rod, sweet home
Where I used to be jostling, as well as love-
O'er a maiden by my side.

There beside the shallow streamlet
Below the murmuring mill,
Where we paused in the sedge, and listened,
As our thirsty steed stood still.

Where we heard the wood-thrush's wreckist
Sound across a wild turreal wave,
As that, folded fast in a last embrace,
We should find in its depths our grave.

For circumstances drew the barrier
Of varying fortunes and ends,
And ever the gulf was widening
Between our sundered friends.

And we parted—as in all honour
With one last pure kiss in the cells.
Ah! I wonder if she remembers it
In the palace wherein she dwells!

For there, with her lord, she queens it
With a regal grace, they say
That befits her rank and riches,
To stand for, just away.

No matter: to me is ever comes back
When the woodlands are golden and red;
Though it comes with a mourning and sad unrest,
Like the ghost of a love that is dead.

KATE ARLINGTON;
OR,
The Buccaneer's Bridal.

A STORY OF SHIP AND SHORE.

By SYLVANUS COBB, Jr.

CHAPTER I.

THE STONE HOUSE AND ITS WARDERS.

It was among the middle of the forenoon when the older mariners on the wharves at the Grogan Island, and on seen on the island had seen all safe and snug and the lofty spars lowered, and ordered his boat to be in readiness at the gangway. Then he entered the cabin, where he found his captive evidently expecting him. Friday was also there, and Kate Arlington, with a number of women which his master had ordered.

"Take the case to the boat," said Dixon, "and then come back."

The negro shouldered the hamper, and mounted the ladder, and when he was gone the chief turned to Kate. If there was any eagerness in his manner, he did not show it; but the smile upon his face was too superficial to escape detection. The smile was not in his heart.

"Miss Arlington," he said, "I have, as you have probably anticipated, arranged to give you a bit of fresh air upon shore. I want you to see what an elysium we have in this far-away nook. I think some kind spirit must have reserved it especially for our benefit."

"Are we to return to the vessel?" Kate asked, in a tone of considerable anxiety.

"At some time," replied Dixon, with a slight hesitation. "You will be as safe on shore as here."

I only asked that I might know how to prepare.

You need borrow no trouble about preparation, my dear. Our servants will attend to that. You will find service from your own sex on the island."

"Do we start soon?"

"As soon as Friday comes back to get your wardrobe—which he is—I am to go and make ready."

Kate waited to her state-room, and her first care, upon securing herself that she was unobserved, was to secrete other articles than her clothing. This done, she donned her hat and mantle, and once rejoined Dixon. Friday was soon on in advance with such articles as he could carry, and the party followed to the shore, and they followed with Kate upon his arm.

Kate saw Tom Gaston as she passed the quarter-deck, and she marked his look of agony, and felt his cry of alarm. All she could do was, to show by her bearing that she was not afraid. She thought of those who had been left behind, and that for those who has confidence in self and in God there is nothing to not sustain. She made no concession and, as Kate quickly observed. She descended to the boat, and was pulled to the island, and the landing of coral rocks had been built out from the gently sloping beach.

It was truly a beautiful spot. A light, sandy soil covered by the deposits of ages of vegetable and animal life; numerous springs of pure fresh water, gushing out from the rocky covering of coral; birds, and trees, a grove of palms grew near to the water's edge, and passing this found young oranges and lemons and limes in profusion. Upon the highest portion of the island were several stately mahogany trees, with many of their rich, lilac-like flowering spikes still blooming. Several long, built of mahogany logs, and thatched with palm leaves, and the strange grove near the eastern shore, and further up was a more pretentious building of stone, and this was near to the latter structure also that the walls were thick and strong, and that it occupied much space upon the ground; and as she came to the grassy slope in front of the house she saw another thing to which Dixon called her attention.

"Here, my point," said he, sweeping his hand as he spoke, "you can see the whole extent of my territory. We deem it a vast amount of property in a very small compass. What say you?"

Kate looked, and beheld the water upon both hands. The island was not more than a mile long by half a mile wide, and on three sides the seemingly boundless stretch of calm, sunless rocks and coral reefs, washed by the surging sea, broke in close upon the shore of the island.

"It is certainly a pleasant spot to the eye," she said, absently. She was looking at upon the brig, which could be seen through a vista of the orange trees, as she spoke.

"And you can make it a pleasant spot in every way, if you choose," returned the chief-tain, with meaning of his manner.

Kate did not reply to this, for at that moment her attention was attracted to the group of women standing near. She had seen several across upon the island, but here were two more than she had seen before. Two of them were evidently Spanish, and the other two were Indian. Both of the Spanish were quite young, and one of them was very beautiful. She was tall and queenly in her form, and her features were regular and handsome. Her complexion was dark, but the negro clearly predominated. In years she was sixty, though she did not look it. Her features were prepossessing and held their own wonderfully, and there was not a bend in her form to indicate the lack of vigor. A cane was upon her.

The second of the twain—second because she came out after the woman—was a mulatto, black as night, and of gigantic proportions. She was at least seven feet high, with broad, sloping shoulders, full breast, and massive limbs. He was a native African—an Ashantee—and had been brought from the slave coast by the buccaneers. He was other than the woman, being five-and-thirty,—but as far as his bodily powers were concerned, he had not passed his prime.

The man was called Moses, and the woman answered to the name of Hagar; and they had come to the island with the Spanish buccaneer Ribera many, many years before, and by Ribera they had been installed as custodians and wardens of the island. Ribera and Ribera's successors had been glad to retain them in their places, for they were faithful as slaves until Barbor Dixon had come to the command; but Dixon, recognizing the skill that was in them, gave them their old places and secured the deed by written contract signed by all his officers. The result had not disappointed him. Being free, they found pride in anything their employer and their greatest pleasure was, to serve the man who had given them their liberty. The stone house on the island were theirs, and Moses and Hagar were proud in their mastership of it.

"Cap'n Dixon," said Hagar, with an odd mixture of grandeur and subservancy in her manner, "we's glad to see ye back."

"And I am glad to see you looking so well, Hagar," returned the chief, in a tone which the woman took eagerly.

"Yes, Massa Dixon, I dunno, you are growin' young yourself."

The Ashantee smiled a grim, satisfied smile, and took the captain's hand in his.

"It's a free man, Cap'n, as' dat makes me like a new young; an' de woman, she new man must be young."

And he chuckled at his wit, and then straightened himself up and looked grand again, and spoke to the Spanish girl.

"Is dis house ready, Miss Inez?"

"Every thing is all ship-shape, Cap'n. Will you come in?"

"Yes!—and you may send one of your helpers down to the boat to help Friday for the day bring up the luggage. Hagar will show us in."

If Kate had hoped that she might find sympathy and the secret of her fate in the face of Spanish upon the island, she could not look for it in the face of Inez. Her face was fair to look upon, and knew that she was the object of the wicked jealous of her fate, but Inez knew it not. Let she did not. Her self-will serve us. I shall send my bring him."

"This," said Dixon, presenting her to the negress, "is Hagar. She will be very kind to you for my sake.—Hagar, this is Kate Arlington, who is to be my bride next year."

Will take good care of her, Massa Dixon."

"I think we shall get along very well together," said Kate, taking the woman's hand without betraying a shudder.

"Oh, course we shall," responded Hagar; and for an instant her features really softened as she gazed into the clear blue eyes and upon the fair face of her new charge. Then she grasped the girl's hand, and led the way into the house.

The hall was long and narrow, with doors upon either hand, but the guide kept on to the extreme end, where a door opened into a second hall which ran at right angles with the first. Here were doors on the right hand, but the left was open, and there was a fine view from it. The hall was carpeted with matting, and the walls were hung with gay-colored tapestry, and the ceiling was of white plaster, with a broad cornice of the same material. The furniture was massive, and consisted of chairs, tables, and sofas of the most costly woods and elaborate workmanship, and the tapestry was relieved by and other rich ornaments. Lamps and fragrances and vases of gold were upon the heavy sideboard, and costly pictures, in heavy gilt frames, were hung in festoons of the rich tapestry of the walls.

Kate could readily conceive that the buccaneer had lavished upon the slope of all nations in the furnishing of their island palace, and a thrill of horror passed through her frame as she beheld, and realized the wealth around her.

"While we are engaged in discovery," said Dixon, with a smile, "I may as well show you other apartments which will be exclusively for your use for the present. This is your dressing-room."

And he threw open a door to the right, exposing a small apartment, back of the anteroom, which was fitted up with every thing that was convenient for bathing and toilet. Then he stepped over and opened a door upon the opposite side, showing a large apartment, of fair dimensions, and furnished with a degree of luxurious splendor equal to the drawing-room.

"I think," he added, after he had exhibited the premises, "you will be comfortable here. You certainly will be if you choose."

Kate made no reply, and presently Dixon turned to the door, and led the way into the next apartment. When they had been all there the chief addressed his captive again:

"Do you think you can be comfortable here?"

Kate seated herself upon an ottoman, and in calm, measured tones replied—

"Do you think, sir, that I have any concerned, my answer might be prompt and unequivocal? But I am not. I am in your power, and you will, no doubt, do according to your own in a perplexing state of anxiety and suspense."

"Indeed, my dear girl," cried the pirate, frankly, "I have thought as much as you have to suppose. Tell me how I can relieve you, and it shall be done."

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"Indeed, my dear girl," cried the pirate, frankly, "I can see thought as much as you have to suppose. Tell me how I can relieve you, and it shall be done."

MISS ARLINGTON RECEIVING A PRESENT OF A BASKET OF FRUIT.

The question was an unfortunate one; and for the first time Dixon's face flushed out his sweet of it. He shuddered, without stopping to consider, and replied—

"Why, I suppose I can, Miss Arlington, if you think I have not done enough as to have incurred your displeasure, but my very eyes, and I have not been so. Be it said, in candor, I have, and calling a halt to the nurse in my own hands all the time. No harm has been done, and I have no blame for you. You have blame for Friday. He is a weak-headed old rascal, and is tender-hearted. I knew him well before I suffered him to wait upon you; and, knowing you, I felt that I could trust him. But, my girl, you see that the people here differed. Moses and Hagar are old, and have grown attire with all their power to please you. Your comfort in all proper ways; but if you think to approach them with temptation to be false to me, you will sadly mistake. In fact, you can make enemies of them by offering them the price of treachery. Let me advise you to beware of that."

Kate betrayed the first real sign of alarm that had escaped her since leaving the vessel; but she did not speak. She bowed her head, and folded her hands upon her lap; and as she remained mute Hagar came in and announced that refreshment had been prepared.

"You may serve it here," Dixon told her.

Hagar drew out an ebony table, inlaid with pearl, and covered it with silver and gold, and then went away, and brought in a silver salver loaded with delicacies.

Kate partook, but without an appetite. When she found the gaze of the buccaneer fixed upon her she shrank and covered as she had not done before, and seemed far more pale than she had ever appeared in the eyes of the brig. If Dixon observed this, he did not speak of it. He ate and drank, and then arose from the table.

"Now, my girl," said he, taking his hat from the sideboard, "I must leave you with those who will serve you well. Every wish not conflicting with the object of your sojourn here will be promptly gratified. Be not afraid to speak your wants. Have you anything to say—anything to ask—before I go?"

"You say you have been frank," said Kate, with something of the old firmness, "and I will be frank with you. You have spoken of my Donald Gaston. I am his friend—and I had been planned a nearer relationship between us than that now existing,—and you will not expect that my friendship for him will cease."

Dixon nodded, and said he did not expect any such thing. She might speak of him as she to any in that direction without fear.

"Then," said Kate, "I ask that he may be done with Thomas Gaston while I am left in circumstances."

"Your wish is strong, Miss Arlington. But you can rail it duramen if you like."

"I will do what you please," retorted the captive, with a curl of the finely moulded lip that gave token of a wondrous reserve of inner strength. "We will not handy words upon the subject. I have no fear of your intentions concerning Mr. Gaston?"

"Then," said Dixon, with a shrug, and only with a shrug, "you may rest easy. I have in his hands for whom he must care. I cannot harm him until they are removed, and I have become my wife by that time, and after that he shall be his own master, to return home at pleasure."

"Will he be permitted to see me here?"

"Most decidedly—not."

"Then I remain on board the brig?"

"No. The brig will not go to sea again until I am ready to go with her. You will remain upon the island."

"Barker Dixon, answer me one more question. Am I to be your wife—if such a thing can be permitted by the good God—how will you dispose yourself in Boston for my fortune?"

The pirate smiled a dark, grim smile.

"I shall go to your father," he said, "and ask his blessing upon our union, and tell him that the life of his child depends upon my safety. I will show to him that I have come to me through the raising of a finger on his part, the steel will enter the heart of his daughter! Remember—I know him. While I hold his child in my hands, I hold the key to his heart and his will. Do you understand?"

"I understand!" said the captive; and with an expression of deep loathing and disgust upon her fair face, and with a shudder which she could not repress, she turned away.

And so the pirate chieftain left her.

CHAPTER XI.

LEAP.

The captive did not remain long in her dependent position after Dixon had left. She lifted her head, and looked around, and then she went to the window, from which she was able to see over the garden without was small, and the wall was not high, and the high and strong—a wall which could not be scaled without artificial help. Still, the wall was not an insurmountable barrier. Kate said to herself, as she examined it, that it offered little real hindrance to a persevering prisoner. She was hurried was beyond. A prisoner might not yet be able to leave the island. Days could be no escape without a boat and a pilot; and where could these be found? Even should the boat be gained, where could the pilot be found able and willing to guide it through the labyrinthine pass of the coral reefs?

From the window Kate went to the washstand, and bathed her face and hands, and by the way of entrance. There was no window, but it was only a loop-hole, not wide enough for the passage of a grown person. Next she visited the sleeping room. Here, likewise, was a narrow, glazed aperture, but no means of passage further. The apartment was furnished in a princely manner with a magnificent painting of the Crucifixion upon the wall. Kate knelt before it meekly, upon a bracket of ebony, directly below it. The bed was an elaborate affair, of French workmanship, with a counterpane of wrought silk. But the captive had no admiration for this regal display. She only wondered, as she gazed, who had been robbed that the pirate's lair might be thus supplied.

By and by Hagar came in to remove the table, and Kate observed her movements. She could send a sweeping glance around as she entered, and when she left she looked more critically upon the prisoner and upon her surroundings; and yet from that glance she could not have gained all the information she sought. With deliberate caution she moved across the floor to the place, and stationed herself in the window.

Kate found that she had no mark of humanity in the woman—no sympathy which she could hope to enlist into adverse compassion to the chief. Hagar was evidently a woman of strong will, and she had been long associated with the pirates and the Spanish buccaneers to be easily enlisted; but there had been glances of the brown eyes, and gleams shooting athwart the swarthy features, which were not the result of being indications of coarse vitality. Not only was it accessible to mould, but it was not of the nature of stone. Kate resolved to be the wife of Captain Dixon—if she could. She might feminine contrast; but in comparison with any man of the pirate crew she was physically immense.

Kate knew that it was upon the point of taking up the true fair departure, Kate spoke:

"Hagar, you have spoken most kindly. I am likely to remain here some time."

The woman looked up, but she nodded; and Kate saw by her look present to say that she was not to be questioned. But Kate was not to be easily put off. She arose from her seat as in affirmation, and proceeded—

"Captain Dixon has told me that I am to be made comfortable. In the first place, I would like to have my own clothes sent to me."

Hagar nodded again, and presently, as Kate saw that she was about to go, she spoke:

"I do all you want done."

"Will you do what I tell you?"

"Why you ask?"

"Because I should have you told them be kind to me."

The woman gazed sharply into the captive's face, and the sinister look vanished from her features, and a look of pleasure took its place. Such look its place which said very plainly that Kate had touched the right chord, and touched her fingers upon her inmost soul.

"I take care of you. If my girl come, she come here and see what I tell her. I make you comfortable."

Then, pausing, Kate, with a smile of approval, "we ought to understand one another. We may have been frank," said Kate, with something of the old firmness, "and I will be frank with you. You have spoken of my Donald Gaston. I am his friend—and I had been planned a nearer relationship between us than that now existing,—and you will not expect that my friendship for him will cease."

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"I understand!" said the captive; and with

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"You know that I would escape from your trap if I could; but I do not think it polite to decorate myself by useless struggling. If the fate is fixed, I must abide. To impose your mercy would be a waste of breath."

"Not so, lady. I will be as merciful as man can be that loves. If you ask me to forego my determination of marriage, why, then, I answer you, I shall be utterly impervious to either prayer or blandishment."

"Then I will not ask you."

A little pause, and then she added,—

"Captain Dixon, you said to me to-day that you had been cognizant of Friday's services to me. I have no desire, and I certainly have not the native propensity to be ungrateful. But I would have you to know that Friday has done nothing which could appear to him wrong. I think he would have suffered the torture rather than to have done what he knowingly betrayed the trust you gave him. I say this because he was kind to me, and I cannot bear the thought that he should suffer on my account."

"Make yourself entirely easy on that score," returned Dixon. "I know the old darkey well; and I know him when he is faithful, and for your service. He has not disappointed me. He has done well, and up marvels."

"I am glad of that."

The pirate nodded his gratitude, and pressed Kate asked:—

"Have you sent for the priest yet?"

"No. I shall send him early to-morrow morning. We do not send out decoys by daylight."

"It is not a long run?"

"No. If the lady faction is found at home, and is well, he may be here within three days."

Kate turned away, and walked to the starboard, and offer a few words of comfort or solace her importunate he bade the captive good-evening, and took his leave. Kate had laid it upon her tongue to ask him if he was going to Isabelino after the priest, but she left the question back. When he had gone she arose and went to the books. She was not in the mood for reading, but she found pictures and maps which interested her momentarily.

On the following morning Hagar brought in the breakfast, and when she had made ready and time to remove the trays, she brought with her a dusky damsel whom she introduced to her daughter, Leah.

"When I can't come," she said, "Leah will come in my place. Leah can do it well do well."

Leah was a strong built, well-proportioned girl of about twenty. She was not black, but in no sense fit-looking. Her skin was of that rich brown color peculiar to the West Indies, her features were regular, and the same could while her hair, black as black can be, hung in glossy ringlets low down upon her neck.

Kate greeted the new-comer with a cheerful word and a smile, and she was certainly pleased thereat. Her dark eyes sparkled with wonderful light, and her countenance took a well-disposed look was kindly.

Hagar soon had the trays of the dinner, and Kate received great pleasure at seeing her.

"Don't fear to have me speak," said Kate, benevolently. "I mean to ask no questions. I know whom you serve, and I know what your duty is. But you must let me talk. I shall die of inaction if I cannot talk to somebody. You know how natural it is for a woman to one her tongue. Don't you find it so?"

Leah looked upon her. Her square was the odd mixture of mongrel Spanish and English which we cannot attempt to follow in print. Her voice was soft and musical, and she possessed that happy flexibility of articulation and tone of expression which gives ready indication of the morning of the impassioned speaker.

"I love to talk," she said, "and if my mother will let me, I will talk with you."

There must have been suggestions in Kate's presence and manner which quickened the dusky maiden in spite of herself. The captive's words were kind, and her tones were kind, good opinion, and that she had done this was plain to the eyes of the girl.

And Leah came again, and at this time she seemed as eager to cultivate Kate's friendship as Kate did to cultivate hers. She showed little attestation of kindness, and her voice grew more and more confidential as it talked. Evidently so earthly consideration restrained her from speaking out the truth expressed in her heart. The pirate chieftain, but there was nevertheless a certain reserve in her manner which led her to respect and trust which was pure and good. At all events, unless the light of her eye, and the pleasurable glow of the dusky face, and the music of her voice were unaccountable deceptions, such sympathies were all with the beautiful captive. Kate saw this, and she failed to notice it. Kate saw it, and was glad, and not yet did she presume upon it. She was content to accept the tender cord extended to her, and wait until it was stronger.

Hagar had brought in the supper, and though Kate was impassioned, she made no sign. She would not rise up to the table until she preferred the presence of the daughter. She had seen the mother eat, and she was thankful that it was unnecessary to watch.

And Hagar came to remove the dishes. But half an hour later Leah entered the cabin again with a basket of fruit upon her arm, which she said the captain had sent up for her.

"I am glad to see you, good Leah, but I am not hungry for fruit,—that is not food."

These plantains are very nice," urged Leah. "They are ripened just right, and, as they said he knew you would eat them, if you had not, he would be angry."

"Friday? said Kate, quickly and eagerly. "Friday brought the plantains from the the vessel?"

The hint was not lost. Such a word as that from Friday had meaning—a meaning which, only, unknown to Leah; so Kate accepted the fruit, and she should soon, and surely enjoy the plantains.

"I did not see Friday often?" she asked, after she had taken the basket, and set it upon the floor.

"I see him every day."

"If you please, Leah, I wish you would tell Friday that I am well, and that I appreciate his kindness to me with a great deal of thankfulness. Will you tell him this?"

Indeed I will," answered the girl, with a wonderful expression of pleasure. "I am sure he would deem anything in the world so simple and so innocently human as that."

And, if she did, she did send to Friday any little token of my gratitude, would you give it to him?"

"What would it be?"

"A trifling ring is all of gold."

"Yes,—I would! I am not afraid to do that much, you know."

"Then, my Leah,"

Kate arose and took the girl's hand.

"Leah," she said, with solemn earnestness, "were you to do me service like this, I would die before I would betray you in any way."

The dusky maiden raised the small white hand to her lips and kissed it.

"I care for you," she said; "so be careful for yourself."

And with that she left the apartment.

Kate had found friends. She could not look the subject into her lap. She could not look on top, and they were handsome ones, but she thought not of their handsome looks in the pelting promise—it was promise of another kind that stirred her spirit. Leah had been particularly called her attention to the plantains! And she never appeared to look any thing therefore. In fact, she had none such. She had seen the mother eat of the fruit, and carefully arranged in the centre of the tray, she served a plantain larger and more golden than the mates, and this she laid upon a leaf. Near the spot its rind was cracked, as though from exuberance, and upon pulling this covering away from the fruity pulp, she discovered a small bit of paper, neatly folded, packed away within. She cast a quick glance at the door, and at the window; and then she drew forth the paper and opened it. It proved to be, as she had from the first suspected, a note from Tom. The paper was necessarily small, and the contents brief. Read as follows:

"KATE,—God bless and save you! Can you send me a line in return for this? Let me know what is being done. What can I do? What shall I attempt? Tell me all. Trust me, and confide in me. I send one true and effective friend. If you can get a line to me, I will be sure to receive it. Once more—God bless and protect you!—God help us both!

For a time Kate was so deeply actuated that she was forced to walk to and fro to compose herself; but at length she resumed her seat, and reflected. By and by she went to the table, took a pencil from the drawer, and, here a blank leaf, and upon this she wrote with a hasty hand. She was very brief, and very earnest in her words.

Later in the evening Hagar came in, but made no stay. The captive required no service at her hands, and she bade her charge a very cheerful good-night, and left.

Kate retired at an early hour, and slept, and dreamed.

In the morning Hagar brought in the breakfast, and Leah came with her. Kate saw that Leah bore in the fruit; but she attached no pledge of asking for Leah; but she dared not do it. Nor could she better her anxiety. With a wondrous effort she hid her rebellious emotions, and received the dusky girl with a smile of welcome.

Leah was thank God,—Leah came to take away the tray. Kate took her hand as she bade her good-morning, and left a gift upon the chest. The dusky maiden quivered with joy as she felt the touch of the paper. Kate had in her hand.

As Leah gathered up the dishes Kate talked of the plantains, the fruit in which she placed the seal; and of the crew of the brig; and finally, and last, of Friday. Kate had laid it upon her tongue to ask him if he was going to Isabelino after the priest, but she left the question back. When he had gone she arose and went to the books. She was not in the mood for reading, but she found pictures and maps which interested her momentarily.

On the following morning Hagar brought in the breakfast, and when she had made ready and time to remove the trays, she brought with her a dusky damsel whom she introduced to her daughter, Leah.

"When I can't come," she said, "Leah will come in my place. Leah can do it well do well."

Leah was a strong built, well-proportioned girl of about twenty. She was not black, but in no sense ill-looking. Her skin was of that rich brown color peculiar to the West Indies, her features were regular, and the same could while her hair, black as black can be, hung in glossy ringlets low down upon her neck.

Kate greeted the new-comer with a cheerful word and a smile, and she was certainly pleased thereat. Her dark eyes sparkled with wonderful light, and her countenance took a well-disposed look was kindly.

Hagar soon had the trays of the dinner, and Kate received great pleasure at seeing her.

"Don't fear to have me speak," said Kate, benevolently. "I mean to ask no questions. I know whom you serve, and I know what your duty is. But you must let me talk. I shall die of inaction if I cannot talk to somebody. You know how natural it is for a woman to one her tongue. Don't you find it so?"

Leah looked upon her. Her square was the odd mixture of mongrel Spanish and English which we cannot attempt to follow in print. Her voice was soft and musical, and she possessed that happy flexibility of articulation and tone of expression which gives ready indication of the morning of the impassioned speaker.

"I love to talk," she said, "and if my mother will let me, I will talk with you."

There must have been suggestions in Kate's presence and manner which quickened the dusky maiden in spite of herself. The captive's words were kind, and her tones were kind, good opinion, and that she had done this was plain to the eyes of the girl.

And Leah came again, and at this time she seemed as eager to cultivate Kate's friendship as Kate did to cultivate hers. She showed little attestation of kindness, and her voice grew more and more confidential as it talked. Evidently so earthly consideration restrained her from speaking out the truth expressed in her heart. The pirate chieftain, but there was, nevertheless, a certain reserve in her manner which led her to respect and trust which was pure and good. At all events, unless the light of her eye, and the pleasurable glow of the dusky face, and the music of her voice were unaccountable deceptions, such sympathies were all with the beautiful captive. Kate saw this, and she failed to notice it. Kate saw it, and was glad, and not yet did she presume upon it. She was content to accept the tender cord extended to her, and wait until it was stronger.

Hagar had brought in the supper, and though Kate was impassioned, she made no sign. She would not rise up to the table until she preferred the presence of the daughter. She had seen the mother eat, and she was thankful that it was unnecessary to watch.

And Hagar came to remove the dishes. But half an hour later Leah entered the cabin again with a basket of fruit upon her arm, which she said the captain had sent up for her.

"I am glad to see you, good Leah, but I am not hungry for fruit,—that is not food."

These plantains are very nice," urged Leah. "They are ripened just right, and, as they said he knew you would eat them, if you had not, he would be angry."

"Friday?" said Kate, quickly and eagerly. "Friday brought the plantains from the the vessel?"

The hint was not lost. Such a word as that from Friday had meaning—a meaning which, only, unknown to Leah; so Kate accepted the fruit, and she should soon, and surely enjoy the plantains.

"I did not see Friday often?" she asked, after she had taken the basket, and set it upon the floor.

"I see him every day."

"If you please, Leah, I wish you would tell Friday that I am well, and that I appreciate his kindness to me with a great deal of thankfulness. Will you tell him this?"

Indeed I will," answered the girl, with a wonderful expression of pleasure. "I am sure he would deem anything in the world so simple and so innocently human as that."

And, if she did, she did send to Friday any little token of my gratitude, would you give it to him?"

"What would it be?"

"A trifling ring is all of gold."

"Yes,—I would! I am not afraid to do that much, you know."

"Then, my Leah,"

Kate arose and took the girl's hand.

"Leah," she said, with solemn earnestness, "were you to do me service like this, I would die before I would betray you in any way."

The dusky maiden raised the small white hand to her lips and kissed it.

"I care for you," she said; "so be careful for yourself."

And with that she left the apartment.

Kate had found friends. She could not look the subject into her lap. She could not look on top, and they were handsome ones, but she thought not of their handsome looks in the pelting promise—it was promise of another kind that stirred her spirit. Leah had been particularly called her attention to the plantains! And she never appeared to look any thing therefore. In fact, she had none such. She had seen the mother eat of the fruit, and carefully arranged in the centre of the tray, she served a plantain larger and more golden than the mates, and this she laid upon a leaf. Near the spot its rind was cracked, as though from exuberance, and upon pulling this covering away from the fruity pulp, she discovered a small bit of paper, neatly folded, packed away within. She cast a quick glance at the door, and at the window; and then she drew forth the paper and opened it. It proved to be, as she had from the first suspected, a note from Tom.

"What does that mean?" asked Gaston, as he stood upon the quarter-deck of the Adder, and saw the pinnace filling out from her covered dock on shore.

"I don't know," muttered Lobo Gresher. "The pinnace has done great work ere this in the way of reporting. I've been in her when she's taken a heavy ship under her wing, and built her craft was she stripped. She's a keen one to sail, and them guns aren't to be sneezed at. She's got a long nine, and two double-a-pound swivel-dog on her forecastle than I've got. But I don't think she's been overhauled yet. Leastwise, I don't think she's been on a marauding cruise now. I can't conceive of the object. No, I don't like it. Where's Dixon's gun?" he command, and Jack Thorp ran forward and brought the piece to the stern.

Later in the evening Hagar came in, but made no stay. The captive required no service at her hands, and she bade her charge a very cheerful good-night, and left.

Kate retired at an early hour, and slept, and dreamed.

In the morning Hagar brought in the breakfast, and Leah came with her. Kate saw that Leah bore in the fruit; but she attached no pledge of asking for Leah; but she dared not do it. Nor could she better her anxiety. With a wondrous effort she hid her rebellious emotions, and received the dusky girl with a smile of welcome

BOATING BY MOONLIGHT.

BY GEORGE WATSON KYLE.

Her rose-bud lips were smiling,
And her downcast eyes were bright,
As I glanced at the moonbeams,
That danced on the water that night.
When we pulled the silent oars,
And none but we were near,
While my arm kept time to the low, sweet song
Of the voice so soft and clear.

Gliding down the dancing moonlit stream,
Gliding, gliding in a happy dream—
The sky above, the water below,
The air around, our hearts as light,
And all the world is blue.

Then thus I found the road to me,
And I asked her to be mine.
She said that she would wait with me
Down the swift stream of time;
And whatever storms or trials should come,
And should ripple lightly over,
That side by side we'd clear the tide,
And reach a happier shore.
Gliding, gliding on.

A BONE OF CONTENTION;
OR,
The Waldemar Succession.

By MRS. HARRIET LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HAMPTON BEAUTIES," "THE BAILOR'S SCHOOL," "THE LADY OF KILDARE," "THE OLD LOVE AND THE NEW," "A DARING GAME," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XLI.

MORE'S PAST FURTHER UNVEILED.

Darrel Moer was unable to shake off his horrible dream. He knew that the Hungarian Countess, whom he had seen in Lady Thackera's drawing-room, was the same person who, agitating a girlfriend him had been so much, had known him at some past time, and that the knowledge of him had extended to some of the darker deeds of his life. He hurried home in a state of mental disturbance such as he had rarely experienced, and hastened up to his room, where he found his valet alert and confident engaged in his usual duties.

"Here, Jones," said his master close at his side in his hands, and collected, "I want you to do it!"

"Pour some brandy?" said Moer hoarsely, striking into nervous speech.

Hoy obeyed, bringing a full glass to his employer, who took a liberal draught, and the valet again demanded if his master were ill.

"No, no," said Moer impatiently. "I shall be aboard, Bing. I am a little excited, that's all. Here you ever seen the Hungarian Countess, Lady Rothamere, who is visiting Lady Thackera? Have you seen her in the drives? Has she ever called here?"

"No, sir, I have never seen her," replied Bing, wondering. "She has called here once or twice when Lady Darrel was in. I have seen the servants say, but she was deeply veiled and I never saw her face. I have heard that my lady was going to marry her boy for sure down in the servants' hall that he had been at Lady Thack's house nearly every day for the last three weeks, and he sends a hot-house bouquet to Miss Floyd's residence every other regular; and when the Countess was ill he sent her a large flower basket full of delicious grapes and hot-house peaches and Miss Floyd's maid told me that Miss Floyd and Mrs. Frank Hicks is hopelessly engaged to marry the Countess."

"What nonsense!" exclaimed More. "His lordship will never marry again. He worships the memory of his first wife. He has vowed to the beautiful young Countess he is a confirmed bachelor. Besides, Miss Floyd is a Kirk Hicks's sweetheart. He may consider himself under obligations to Lady Thackera—he has been very kind to him—and she dearly loved his son now dead. Cannot you find out more about the matter, Bing? I have some reason for wishing to know the particulars in his servants' hall? But this is not the question. Who is this Countess?"

She is the widow of the great Hungarian statesman, Lajos Count Rothamere," answered Bing, with an air of possessing superior information.

"I know that; but who was she before she married the Count?" demanded Moer impatiently. She is only about thirty, so she must have married the Count when she was a girl. Did he her to-day as usual?"

"Yes, sir, I have been to the Countess's house in Belgravian Conservatory almost every day since I left Lady Thackera's. I am a good deal in favor with the servants, and I have found out a good deal about the Countess. She is the widow of the great Hungarian statesman, Lajos Count Rothamere," answered Bing, with an air of possessing superior information.

"I know that; but who was she before she married the Count?" demanded Moer impatiently. She is only about thirty, so she must have married the Count when she was a girl. Did he her to-day as usual?"

"Yes, sir, I have been to the Countess's house in Belgravian Conservatory almost every day since I left Lady Thackera's. I am a good deal in favor with the servants, and I have found out a good deal about the Countess. She is the widow of the great Hungarian statesman, Lajos Count Rothamere, who married her when she was a girl. She is very rich, and she has a son and daughter by the Count. Her son is a fine young man, and her daughter is a beautiful young woman. She is very much admired by the gentlemen, and is engaged to marry the Countess."

"What nonsense!" exclaimed Moer. "His lordship will never marry again. He worships the memory of his first wife. He has vowed to the beautiful young Countess he is a confirmed bachelor. Besides, Miss Floyd is a Kirk Hicks's sweetheart. He may consider himself under obligations to Lady Thackera—he has been very kind to him—and she dearly loved his son now dead. Cannot you find out more about the matter, Bing? I have some reason for wishing to know the particulars in his servants' hall? But this is not the question. Who is this Countess?"

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1872.

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FANNY FERN.

Fanny Fern was born in Portland, Me., in the year 1811. Her maiden name was Sara Payson Willis. Her father was Nathaniel Willis, the editor of the *Boston Recorder*, of Boston, to which city he removed while his subsequently famous daughter was yet a little girl. Her mother was a lady of superior intellect and great warmth of affection, and was much beloved by her children.

Fanny Fern was a sister of N. P. Willis, the poet. Her early life was not marked by any extraordinary vicissitudes, but flowed on in the usually sunshiny channels which characterized the girlhood of the daughters of most New England families, in the generation in which is now fast passing away. She grew to womanhood in Boston. In her twenty-third year she married Charles Eldredge, then a cashier of the Mechanics' Bank in that city. Mr. Eldredge was a gentleman of culture and taste. His literal close up to his income, and when, in less than after a short illness, he left his widow, with two children, in exceedingly straitened circumstances.

Then came bitter days. Poverty and disappointment enveloped the household and her little ones, as in a mantle of despair. Mrs. Eldredge tried to earn a support for herself and her children with her needle; in fact, had to tried, she tried literally all the means by which poor mothers are driven to earn bread bread for their hungry offspring, and was equally unsuccessful in her efforts. At last, in her fortieth year, she tried writing for the papers, over the signature of Fanny Fern. Her success was immediate as to popularity, but she met with literary rebuke. It was not the fashion, in those days, to pay much for literary work of any kind. The long columns of her sparkling little articles she got only the meagre remittance of two dollars. As it sometimes took five of her articles to make a column, that was only two dollars apiece for them! But she wrote on and on, with constantly increasing reputation and popularity. Her success was complete, because she had something to say, and knew how to say it. She was, in fact, the first development of American womanhood giving the world a piece of its mind, and the world was glad to get it. The country press hailed her advent with delight, and copied her pieces with enthusiastic compliments.

Who is Fanny Fern? began to be the question of the day. The secret of her identity was so well guarded that the most inquisitive could not get track of her; and the most absurd suppositions, guesses, announcements, denials and discussions which were published on the subject, greatly enhanced the public interest in the inexplicable literary phenomenon that was winning the hearts and captivating the admiration of all classes from one end of the land to the other.

Such prodigious talent as Fanny Fern exhibited in every piece she wrote could not, of course, go unrewarded forever. Publishers and the general result was that by the close of the year 1851 she had received more than a sum of ten thousand dollars, and was receiving a handsome remuneration for her newspaper articles.

Fanny Fern was also a religious woman. She believed in all that is good and pure and holy, and detested whatever is evil and impure and unholy. She was distressed at the snobbery or pretentiousness, and loved to in in sympathy with the poor and humble. She was brave and true and honest and faithful to her very heart's core; and possessed the influence of these personal qualities, expressed through her genius, which gave such an attractive flavor to her writings. With all her intellectual superiority, she was not been added to these her courage, her honesty of purpose, and her faithfulness of heart, she would not have been Fanny Fern.

Fanny Fern's first book, *Fern Leaves*, was published in June, 1853, and had a sale of over ninety thousand copies. Her next volume was a juvenile, entitled *Little Ferns for Fanny's Little Friends*. This was published in December, 1853, and had a very large sale. In May, 1854, she brought out her second series of *Fern Leaves*, which was followed by *Ruth Hall* and *New Chapter*. All three of these works acid largely, and added much to the fortune of the now prosperous authoress.

In the spring and summer of 1855, Fanny Fern wrote her famous hundred-dollar-a-column story for the New York *Ledger*. In January, 1856, she became a permanent contributor to the *Ledger*, her connection with which was only dissolved by her death. She wrote up to the last week but one of her life.

In contemplating the literary career of this distinguished authoress, one naturally seeks to penetrate the secret of its success. This is not a difficult thing to do. The secret of Fanny Fern's success is to be found in her admirable common-sense, her perennial cheerfulness of heart, and her downright earnestness of purpose. She was one of the most humorous and witty of writers, but her humor and wit were never wasted in purposeless display. She always took aim at something that deserved to be hit, and never failed subjects to which the great honest masses of the people were interested.

During the many years of Fanny Fern's connection with the *Ledger*, she was in the frequent habit of addressing notes to us. We append a few brief extracts from them, illustrative of her different moods of feeling and thought.

In one of her earliest letters, she makes the following touching reference to her mother:

"Nobody can tell the longing I have for *my mother*, although I am a grandmother myself. Ah, and *one other*, are the only human beings who ever thoroughly understood me. Ah, that one mother! There is nothing like that, this side Heaven."

The first purpose of her life, to accomplish some good in the world, is expressed in one of the following:

"I really don't desire to *do some good* with what influence I have. If I know myself, that is my *first* wish."

In the subjoined extract from a letter written in the country she pleasantly takes off her husband's mode of driving a horse:

"He driving, I must say, is not up to his imaginative exploits, for when he isn't doing an error he is in his mind's eye. He is always in a hurry, playing with Effie, addressing that a team is coming, or that we either lose or gain something. I intend to inspect—hence my bargain with the stage-driver to let me ride with him one day."

She thus refers to some criticism that had been made on one of her own articles in the *Ledger*:

"The article on 'Farmers' Wives,' which she so much admires, was written because I felt that some farmers not to overwork them for the sake of gain. She has quite misinterpreted it. As to Henry Ward Beecher, I shall shoulder none of his sins! I enjoy hearing either his or your attacks; and my opponents are sure to go laughing home!"

In a note from Old Orchard Beach, she criticises a sarcastic paragraph about herself out of the Boston *Transcript*, and concludes with an unprincipled paper published in Chicago—not sure:

"Think of the impudence of the Editor of *another* paper in that benevolent city, in *stealing every now and then some attack on me like the above!*"

The depth of her religious feeling is shown in the following:

"Dear Bonner: I only wish you had heard Dr. Hall on Sunday morning. I said to myself, the sermon was so appropriate, so sure for the comforting of mourners, so strong in its denunciation of sin so strong and so bold.

"Yes, yes, I am still listening. I said to myself: This man does not belong to these sick Christians whom I know. They are not worthy of him.' No? His place, by right of his being able to say the just that comforts, and the bold that stings, is his own magnetic, convincing manner, is with the strong, the self-reliant, the successful. The sick need no such person.

"Now, my dear friend, I suppose I am [illegible] as the sugar fancy of those men, young and old, who [illegible] so that between them they seem to know a little. I am not only went out to do it, but went alone and with some aims, and accomplished them. I am well rewarded. Yours truly and always,

"Fanny Fern."

One of her letters has the following postscript:

"I think is written so badly that you can't read it. I know that you are always in a hurry when you cook about dinner, and washed Effie's face and hands, and when you have to go to market, and she might go with a neighbor who came for her. Is not that a sufficient excuse?"

She was keenly appreciative of any little act of unexpected kindness, and most prized as well as hearty in her expression of thanks, as appears from the following letter:

"Brooklyn, Sept. 16, 1856.

"Mr. Bonner—*Dear Sir*: Those beautiful roses made my eyes swim. I know no other man who would have so thought of my pleasure on an occasion, and done it so delicately. You have added much to the happiness of a sick child. I know not which time can neither blunt nor chill, as my calendar is to be graduated from them.

"Yours truly and always,

"Fanny Fern."

In the same spirit, fourteen years after, she writes:

"Jan. 26, 1870.

"My Dear Bonner: How did you know that I was once an artist, and that I had been trying all day because there was so much in the future to do? I never had a picture framed before, and that is my *very* dream when I can dream! It was just one of your many thoughtful acts that I was never without knowing it. Thank you for the gift and for generously trusting me.

"Yours, Fanny Fern."

Fanny Fern's Last Words.

"It is written, every idle word." Such were the words of Fanny Fern.

It will soon be over—how soon, indeed, will be known only with all of us!

Men no longer live to the age of the patriarchs; only one person in a hundred lives to see sixtieth birthday, and that is the reason why Fanny Fern died; she was not one of the hundred.

It will be over soon. But when it is over, will it be well if it can be truthfully said of us, that we were always as thoughtful of others, as generous and unselfish as Fanny Fern was of her little granddaughter, when, the evening of her death, she said to her mother: "Put her to bed early, and if I die in the night, don't wake her, to tell her, before morning!"

A Simple Invention Greatly Needed.

In cities, towns and large villages, coal gas is almost the only material employed for lighting purposes. But in country houses, and with the great majority of the inhabitants of the United States, kerosene, or some kind of refined coal oil, burned in lamps, is the expensive, unless manufactured on a large scale. And, indeed, the coal oil is but little cheaper than gas, and requires a splendid light compared with anything known and in general use for illuminating purposes.

But there is one difficulty, almost universally experienced in burning coal oil, that the wick is turned up a little too high it emits a black, disagreeable smoke, requiring the lamp chimney so as to render it opaque, and covering the ceiling above with lamp-black. And this results from the slightest degree of carelessness in adjusting the wick. Not one person in a hundred is sufficiently careful always to avoid it.

What is needed is some simple contrivance which will arrest the screw when the wick is turned high enough to burn, and before it is high enough to smoke.

Cannot somebody among our million and one inventors devise such a contrivance?

TEMPERATE ZONES.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

The fullest and best life must be sought in the Temperate Zones. Cold and heat, in excess, are alike, in disturbing men and reducing their power over nature. The action of nature upon the human organization, and of man upon nature, constitute the business of life.

When the elements are in such extremes of force as they are in the polar regions, they diminish the force and productiveness of man. The arctic region shuts one up for more than half the year in his house, and for the same relentless time stops and iron. The sins of the world to a freezeblast, is the sins of his underground home.

The tropics are to be chosen rather. But the fierce sun debilitates, and drives men out of more than half the hours of the day.

This restriction of activity, however, is not so much to be deplored as the limitation of enjoyment through the senses and the taste. There is, to be sure, a prodigality in nature under the tropics which, for a time, is surprises. But the eternal summer takes away from those attractions, presently, and the exactions which are the occasion of so many pleasures. The things which we become mad to cease to have the effect of making us feel tremendously wrought, and are no longer impressed with size. Even the fruits, which are the glory of the tropics, are not to be compared with those which, in the less bib enjoyment in them, but it would be impossible to describe the delight with which at first. It is probable that other things would have the same effect upon us. The sense of wonder would cease to be great, in the music in which it is now exquisite. Only the finest taste would remain.

Summer would not be half so sweet if there were no winter. We know things that we think things large, and large things that make others small

THE STAR OF LOVE.

BY FRANK J. OTTARSON.

'Tis night, my love! the stars are bright,
And cold the wild wind blows;
Yon pine beneath a bright night—
I mourn in pride mourn!
A lonely watch I keep on earth
Between an interspace,
You keep the land that sw your birth,
I rank in foreign space.

But, love! you know the promise made,
The day our paths diverged,
That whether sober sun or shade,
Our hearts should be united.
At midnight on a mount of love
Our oaths' eyes would rest,
And then our hearts, however far,
Would seem together blest.

And not a night has passed away
But I that promise kept,
Looked for the star of love alway
Before my misery slept.
Though oft the cerulean clouds would come,
And mantle all the sky,
And leave within my silent home
A sense of misery.

Yet then I thought that ever you
Were looking for that star,
And kept the midnight oratorio
Stars in the atmosphere;
That you could see, if I could not,
Our star in the skies—
Our star of love, for we
We sought for sacrifice.

Another year, my wandering over,
I'll seek my native land again;
I'll watch that star on sea or shore,
And bid it guide me o'er the main.
Then by thy side, star-guiding still,
Love's star, I'll watch with thee,
Home hearts's shore, and then thy sy fill
Of stars will gather from your eyes.

The Plot Against Hawley;

OR, THE

PRISONER OF DESOLATION.

By LEON LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOY MARTYR," "RED KNIFE," "THE HIDDEN HORSE," "RUDY'S SEARCH," "THE OUTCAST OF MAR," "MARK HIDDEN'S LUCK," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXV.

MR. AYMAR'S ESCAPE.

The pirates had scarcely left the Indiaman when a long slender panel at the starboard end of Mr. Aymar's state-room was drawn aside, and a man's face appeared at the opening. It was old Ingis, and he bring a depth of eighteen inches.

The wall, in fact, between Mr. Aymar's apartment and the one next adjoining was double, and a space of the size mentioned had been so cunningly secured between the two rooms that no one would have suspected its existence.

In this space, then revealed by the sliding of a movable panel, was Mr. Aymar's money.

It was enveloped in stout canvas bags, just forty in number, and every bag contained a roll from one hundred pounds of gold.

It was with a look resembling that the secret panel shot open, as the Malay dimmer and his men retreated to their own vessels, and it was with a similar quickness that the face of a man presented itself at the opening, and that a pair of keen eyes looked out into the room.

This man was Mr. Aymar.

He was indeed aboard of the doomed Indiaman, as Capt. Graham, after discovering the ship, had so regretfully discovered.

A few minutes previous to the departure of his friends, as narrated, the old East-Indian had entered his cabin, and in his exhaustion—

"It's no secret—oh!" he had muttered, "concerning him, I mean."

Concerning himself in his secret place of refuge had been provided for his money, as had already patiently during the long hours the pirates had devoted to their search—waited during all the noise and excitement of the scene we have narrated, and until the retreat of the last one of the suspected hordes of ruffians to their own vessel.

Our brief but significant reference cast Mr. Aymar now around him, as he hastened to the state-room of his enemies, and then he slipped noisily through the panel-way, and drew his tall form erect, with a relief that so many hours of a cramped and constrained posture rendered really delicious.

His face was a sight to look upon at that moment, it was so calm, so expressive of a quiet satisfaction.

"Yes, they're gone," he breathed, after another brief contact of his eyes with the pirates has turned out quite as far as I can see."

A second glance cast by Aymar around him, as he stepped from his state-room, and now in state concentration of all the retreating ruffians led so hastily kindled upon the floor of the cabin.

The fire was making rapid headway, but it was still small and circumscribed, and to the thoughts it entirely with a blanket was the work of a moment.

The gloom—the darkness even—which instantly succeeded within the cabin, told Mr. Aymar that night was coming around him.

"So much the better," was his involuntary ejaculation. "I can get off unseen. Fortune has indeed favored me."

Taking his way quickly but cautiously to the deck, he rounded under the bulwarks to a point where he could watch the retreating pirates, and his subsequent had already become a mere speck in the shadows with which it was being engrossed.

Then he looked sharply along the deck of the Indiaman and into the hold.

Quivering with strange dips and reels, the ship lay wallowing upon the shyest ready to engulf her, like some dying monster in the last gasps of its agony.

The fires kindled in the hold had extended to the upper decks, burning slowly, owing to the sealing everything had received from the rain, but the one started immediately beneath the main hatch was beginning to make a ruddy glow between decks, and to even glare out feebly upon the night.

The flames were scarcely more vivid, however, than were the gleams of Mr. Aymar's eyes, as he noted the various features of the scene around him.

"There is time," was all his further comment.

Leaping to the smallest boat carried by the ship—the only boat now remaining, and the one of which he had spoken to Capt. Graham—he lowered it successfully to the water and made it fast to the bulwarks.

His next measure was to bring his gold from the state-room, and how it into the bottom of the boat.

A few minutes sufficed for this proceeding.

Next he secured a liberal supply of water and provisions, several blankets, a compass and other instruments, some clothing and a couple of muskets—in short, nearly all the effects he had brought aboard the ship, and everything he was likely to need—and these he lowered himself, and then cast off the vessel of the fastenings, and pulled clear of the vessel.

A series of dull explosive sounds, as of cannon fired under water, almost instantly succeeded.

The air between decks was bursting forth violently, through numerous vents and scuttles, owing to the increasing pressure of the water into every nook and cranny of the hull.

Mr. Aymar comprehended that he had not a moment to lose, and in an instant too soon.

He was astonished, in fact, to see how low in the water the *Feriel* had already settled, and he realized that only the quietude of the sea had permitted her to remain afloat until that moment.

Pulling away rapidly—he cared not in what direction—until she had become an object to point in the midst of the darkness now enveloping the scene, Mr. Aymar rested upon his oars and waited for the inevitable catastrophe which was to crown the history of the noble Indiaman.

The fire in the lower hold had now won advantages sufficiently into the sky to indicate its terrible position, but not enough to reveal Mr. Aymar's presence.

Suddenly there was a loud bursting report—a staggering plunge, and the *Feriel* vanished for ever, leaving such a wild vortex upon the face of the deep that Mr. Aymar had a momentary fear of being drawn down into it, despite all his exertions.

But he finally steadied his boat, and looked around him.

He was alone upon the waters.

A moment shook his frame as he realized his situation.

MR. AYMAR'S ESCAPE FROM THE PIRATES.

He was hundreds of miles from any land, in an open boat, without help, at night, and exposed to instant destruction.

The darkness around him was now so intense that he could not see his hand before his face, and it seemed all the deeper by contrast with the light proceeding so recently from the fated Indiaman.

Yet he smiled as he looked in the direction of his gold.

"At any rate the pirates will not have it," he ejaculated. "In that point at least I am triumphant."

Then, seating himself a few moments as to the course he was now going in, he wrapped himself up snugly in several of the blankets he had brought with him, and lay down to sleep, leaving his frail back to the guidance of Him who rules the tempests.

The sun was just appearing above the horizon when Mr. Aymar awoke. The sky was cloudless and the sea calm, only a light breeze blowing. Not a sail was in sight.

With a heart full of gratitude, the brave navigator bathed his face in the ocean, took a most sea-water, and made a hasty breakfast.

He resolved, as to his course, he resolved a point of sailing, and made a hasty breakfast.

To the south of him lay the great route of all American and English ships proceeding to and from the East Indies, their usual course being through the Straits of Sunda, and it seemed to Mr. Aymar, in his cheerful and hopeful mood, that he would have to coast down to sheer, leaving his frail back to the guidance of

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

The stranger leaped to his feet again, repeating the name of Mrs. Hawley's father, and then dropped back upon his seat, reeling and trembling, and the next instant sinking down unconscious upon the bottom of his boat.

"Look at that!" cried Hawley. "His strength has finally given out altogether. Quick, Jack! Pull for the shore! We must get him to land at once. Let's go!"

Springing to their task, the two men brought their boat alongside of the stranger, and fastened to meet the requirements of the moment. The boats were then lashed together, their sails lowered, and then the unknown was taken in hand, his face bathed with salt water, his hands and wrists chafed, and his body rubbed with strong liniment.

It was several minutes, however, before the stranger gave any signs of life—long time that Will, who conceived the keenest anxieties concerning him, thought he never would draw breath enough; after a sudden deluge of water upon his face from the hands of Jude, and in a couple of minutes more he came back to consciousness, with but few groans and other demonstrations of distress.

"It's my weakness—and excitement," he murmured apologetically. "I've had nothing to eat or drink in twenty-four hours. And I'm not used to such things, you know."

"Who I am?" returned Will, wonderingly. "Why, how does he know or concern you? And who are you?"

"You'd never guess who I am—meeting me in this way," replied the boy, in a manner hardly, as a sad smile communicated the illumination of his wan features. "You've no idea as to me, or what I am, to you?"

"Not a single answer, you. Who can you be?"

"Why, I'm your 'Uncle Tommy!'"

"My Uncle Tommy!"

"Your wife's uncle, you know! The only surviving brother of Isabel Hawley."

"What! Thomas Aymar, of Calcutta?"

"The very man. I see you've been called to you about me. *Brave!* A strange, but joyful meeting!"

The embraces, the hand-shakings, the joyful words that followed, were the spontaneous gush of affection and esteem that succeeded, can be better imagined than described.

But how does it happen that you are here in this strange situation?" asked Will, when at last he deemed it safe enough for a coherent inquiry.

It might retort with a similar question," replied Mr. Aymar, between smiles and tears. "But I'll answer with the least words. I read in the papers, and told you my story before asking for yours."

Mr. Aymar accordingly narrated briefly how upon the marriage of his niece announced in a New York paper he had taken passage for home to America; how he had written to Mrs. Hawley to announce his coming; that his letter had been chased and captured by pirates; that he had been carried to the island of Java upon the Malaysian; how he had reached American island, and had been told that his niece had finally how he had entered the service of Desolation. The comments elicited by this exciting narrative, and especially by Hawley from Jude Breaking, were too many to be placed upon record.

"And now for my story," said Will, when he had the leading facts in the history of his uncle had been made known to him. "But first tell me how you came to be here, and how you got safely away from the city myself. If you'll take charge of our boat for a moment, I'll change my clothes, and we'll be off."

By the time, therefore, that the two boats reached Sunday-by island, Mr. Aymar was aware of all that had befallen Will during the past three years, especially of all that had befallen him during the long year of his absence. He knew the secret of the loss of Derry Jude Breaking, and of the still more wonderful facts pertaining to the discovery of the fortune, and the use to which it had been put by the pirate.

"It is all strange enough—as strange as any romance," was the comment of the old Bachelor, when the narrative was done. "But I'm glad the boys were saved, Will, and it's all as joyful as it is strange. Let us hope that our next joyful meeting my dear nephew, will be the commencement of a new order of things for both of us. And now, my boy, you've had a drink as good as any one, for I'll guess that all you've had since you left the island has been water. Here's a flask of brandy that I've preserved for reaching the island, after finding myself in sight of it. Have a half-a-dram to all right again, and then we'll bury my new-found nephew in some place where you have not the on the old one, and thereupon settle down here for a while and see what Providence in the may have in store for us."

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THE JUDGE'S SECOND WIFE.

BY ANNA SHIELDS.

The wide people, those who manage their neighbors' affairs, and who are always ready to cover their own in spotless purity, had their heads in solemn conclave when Judge Hepworth married the second time. The most addled chaos of venom was in their counsels when the village paper noticed, in a few words of graph, the birth of a son and heir at the great house.

"Poor Clarice," they said, "has no chance now. She had enough to endure when the old earth married a child of a girl who, of course, could not be expected to have any heart. There is no chance for Clarice."

Crossing from the village high-road, and passing down a shady lane, and opening upon on each side of the narrow foot-path, the tawnier colors of the autumn foliage suddenly, as the trees parted at the end of the lane, and a tall, gray tower appeared with a broad mansion the largest house within ten miles, surrounded on all sides by grounds and beautiful with wealth in itself and its surroundings.

When the lane opened upon the shedding fragrance through all regions, and the sunshine were most radiant and winsome, a young girl—a woman, indeed, in her very spring-time of life, yet having already taken the full force of both joy and sorrow into her heart, knelt in one of the rooms of the great house—kneeling before the beautiful face which to the cradle pillow upon which rested the little head of a child. The face was pale and beautiful, but the fine rings of his hair, kissing the dimpled cheek, and the long lashes of the closed eyes.

"O, Heavenly Father, make me worthy of the happiness Thy hand has given me. Guide me, that I may lead the young life Thou hast taught to my care to Thy throne. Grant that my boy may become noble, true and good, like his father; and oh, grant me more worthy of the treasure of his love. I am weak and sinful, weak Thy help I will; for he is my husband and companion to him. I can give him nothing, except for all he has given me but my love. Teach me, Heavenly Father, to be a good wife and a good mother to his child."

And then, without words her heart swelled with deep gratitude and devotion. She had trodden always in lovely places. The child of wealthy parents, she had married the man she loved and who loved her, and had gone from the home of her childhood greater over another. She was very beautiful, and many had thought it a sacrifice when she married a man as old as her own father, yet in her award humility she only prayed to be worthy of the love bestowed upon her.

A few knock at the door roused her, and rising to her feet, she answered the summons. Upon the threshold stood a woman, a few years older than herself, rich, and the head of a handsome boy who had seen two summers of life. The woman was nicely dressed, in shabby mourning, but the child were dainty and expensive garb. Her very air and manner hauntily upon her high-bred birth.

"Did you wish to see me?" Mrs. Hepworth asked, smiling very sweetly.

"May I come in?" was the woman's question, in return.

"Certainly. Take the rocking-chair. You look tired."

The stranger accepted the chair, and looked sadly around the room.

"Everything is altered," she said, in a voice tremulous with emotion. "Everything is changed. Mrs. Hepworth, you have heard of Clarice Manderson?"

"I have not," was the reply. "I am almost a stranger here. We have been in Europe ever since I was married, until a few months ago."

And you never heard of me?" said the stranger, the tears rising in her eyes; "then my name does not mean much to you. I'm now happiness as your husband my father. I'm Clarice Manderson, and I've come to beg—to implore—"

"Your father!" Judge Hepworth your father? He told me that he had only one daughter."

"So I had once dead. I was lost to him by my own disobedience. You love my father?"

"I am a smile, proud, happy and tender, answered.

Then you will understand me," she said, "when I tell you I loved my husband better, even than my father. He was poor, and could not hear of our marriage, and sternly forbade me to speak to him. He considered his calling me that he was a fortune-hunter, a gambler, and unworthy of my love. I would not believe this. To me he was the noblest and best man that God had ever made. I married him in secret, and left home and father. I have been bitterly punished for my disobedience and undutifulness to my father. He has entered my house only a few brief words casting me from his heart and love, my husband died, and I am left friendless and penniless. He had married the daughter of a poor clergyman, and she was dead. Mrs. Hepworth, the millionaire, and found himself surrounded by wealth and luxury. I read in the history of the four years of married misery, and then I came to you, to implore the widest child of my prodigious love, three months later, on the 20th of last May, a son was born. I heard of my father's illness, returned here, hoping for pardon; but the servants refused me admittance to the house. When you came, I determined to make one more effort for forgiveness, and had the child to plead for me. I waited till mother love was strong enough to make me brave, and then, with the child in my arms, came to you, to move your pity for me. Think for my sake, for my father's sake, sorrowing and penitent, and forgive me. Will you do this? Will you be right?"

The choking sobs would be suppressed no longer, and the speaker bent her face upon the shoulder of the child, overwhelmed with weep bitterly. Gentle hands raised her head, and Mrs. Hepworth, with the child in her arms, sought blonde's side, and gently pressed, while the tears of the young pair mingled with each with those of the mother.

There was a moment of silence, and then Mrs. Hepworth said:

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WHERE HE REPENTED.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

The room was still as death, except the low, soft ticking of an ormolu clock on the mantel. In the sunny bay-window the creeping vines and vivid mosses grew and bloomed in his gold-wired cage, the canary hung in the green, moist and wickedly still, and down from the cage Mozart Sandfield stood, with clasped hands, and looked at the motionless form.

Here Leslie Walsingham lay because such a ripple, silent storm of grief as was surging over it that moment. Here was a face so beautifully calm and pure, that any such tempestuous passion was a mockery of suffering. She was not a young girl; Muriel Sandfield was twenty-four; and when a widow of her style and character is overcome with any passion, be it joy or sorrow, fear or hate, it leaves indelible impress.

Mozart Sandfield, loving Leslie Walsingham, her lover, and the one man of many suitors she had ever loved. To him Muriel had poured out all her big, loving heart; in him all that was noble, refined, fascinating in herself found perfect sympathy; and in him her ideal world have fancied her thousand deities. It was little wonder that she loved him as Leslie Walsingham was one of those men who, if they are not worshipped, so be adored; while Mozart Sandfield was an organization that must adore, and be adored in return.

So intense and perfect had been the passion of their engagement, that Muriel often wondered whether her happiness was a premonition or the rule for the generality of women.

Then, like thunder-clap, the previous thunderbolts that flash down death in the midst of a clouds, a telegram from Muriel's uncle announced that Leslie Walsingham, whom he had never seen, but whom he had heard of as a friend of his nephew's, was dangerously ill, and begged that Muriel would come to him.

Muriel never will be so send to me! Muriel, you will not go! I have loved you! Won't you forgive me?"

Muriel's face was pale, and her hands in restless, nervous motion, as she answered:

"I am afraid this will some home to you one day, Mozart, and I must go to my father."

"I was very young, very sweet in her stern decision, and Mozart Sandfield looked at her with a sudden fear that he would never win her.

"You know my opinion on certain subjects, Muriel, and I cannot change it. I never contract to it. Why need we discuss what is irrevocable? I love you, and you promised to be my beautiful darling! Muriel, for ever, good-bye!"

And Mozart Sandfield, with a manly, dignified way, a very rock of adamant.

Muriel, with a heart-ache, and sorrow he left behind him, and a sense of desolation that she had robbed her of what was better than life—forever.

A massive walnut bedstead, painted white and gilt, with curtains of pale blue satin, and lace curtains, daintily embroidered and braided; soft carpets, and rich furniture, and a beautiful girl just budding—fulfilled a light draft of the picture that Muriel saw as she entered Leslie Walsingham's room. Only a warm, weary look in his eyes, was Leslie's face.

Muriel, who had seen him in his hand-some ravages, severe as had been his struggle with death, was not prepared for the wan, pale loveliness that made him so restless and ill—and Leslie Walsingham was still of all the world, knew why it was so.

Muriel, who had loved him, had he learned what, at first, he refused to believe—what his own heart told him was true—that he loved his life, not so much to his three skilful physicians, as to the girl who had come to his sick-room, and with her calm, pure influence through the contagious illness from which even his own relatives fled in fear.

And the silent gentle woman who had nursed him, and Muriel Sandfield, were the two centroids of ground the demon fever had gained, and Leslie Walsingham knew that Muriel Sandfield.

He had refused to credit the truth, until Mozart's letter left no room for discredit in that, when he reluctantly believed, he had turned his face to the wall, and for days and days and strove to quench the fires of gratitude, love and passion that burned about his heart. Then the conflict lasted; the while he was peacefully dozing, Muriel Sandfield was aware that, like oil on troubled waters, Muriel Sandfield's presence calmed.

Leslie Walsingham was happier than then he had been for months, and Muriel was happier than she had been for years. Two years ago a year ago he had been her, and now Leslie Walsingham was dying. But now, when the scales were taken from her eyes, and she saw him as he was—and he longed to be her and bay her pardon on his knees.

Muriel Sandfield, who had been the means of that resolution, and a fortnight later they were married, and Muriel Sandfield was the happiest woman in this wide world.

How he loved her, with what fierce pain he had loved her, and how he worshipped her, all of his life, his own sweet, forgiving Muriel!

Leslie Walsingham had never seen the man in the parlor to meet him, in wide-eyed surprise. But he rose to meet him, and he rose and kiss her, and whisper such love words as only the world have for the world's one, and they would sit down and talk, and she would smile and blush, and he would laugh.

His eyes were tender with his sweet memories, and his voice was fairly rich, as Muriel came from the carriage and up the old familiar steps.

Leslie Walsingham was a rich man—owned a slim light above through from a doctor, and Muriel Sandfield was a poor girl.

Muriel was the more beautiful of the two, and Muriel when she came down, for of course she was to be married.

So he walked softly in across the dim room, and Muriel Sandfield looked up and saw him, and knew.

Yes, knew! Knew that sent him reeling several steps! Knew that sent him reeling backward, and his face was white as death, and his eyes were full of a wild, terrible fear and shock! For there, just under the dim burning light above through from a doctor, was Leslie Walsingham, and peaceful in her calm.

Leslie Walsingham, with the strong nobe bursting from his lips in unpreventable words of love and passion, and the tenderness and reference that lay around her—his wife! Muriel Sandfield, the woman he had married might be a horrid nightmare.

But it was not. Muriel Sandfield was there, and she must be had no other placed, and—she must be had no other placed, and—she must be had no other placed, and—

REFLECTION.

BY MRS. M. A. KIDDER.

You are true to your looking-glass, pretty maid,
And your glass is true to you,
For it gives back your golden wealth of hair,
And your eyes of tender blue.

To you it will prove a faithful friend
From now till the day you die—
Will give you a picture for every hour;
Aye, whether you laugh or cry.

Should a wrinkle creep to your snowy brow,
Or the silver thread your hair,
You have only to go to your trusty glass
To see it mirrored there.

And every shadow of grief and joy,
As every womanly grace,
Will find a double reflected there
On its clear and shining face.

Should passion transform your features fair,
Or should sin distort, alas!
You may see what you'll take for a demon face
In the depths of your looking-glass;

Or the face of a saint that will brighter grow
As the measured days go by;
For your glass will prove a faithful friend
From now till the day you die.

THE RIVAL SISTERS.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF THE "EVIL GENIUS," THE "WHITE TERROR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER LIII.

ON THE TRAIL.

Like one walking in a dream, Raymond went out, followed by old Gumbo. In ten minutes he returned, haggard, overcome by the horror that loomed before him.

"Sit down," said his mother, "and face the position like a man, my son. That girl is certainly Hetty Blake; I am as sure of it now as old Gumbo can be; and it is for you to seek Estelle Landry, and bring her home. Go to New Orleans on the first boat that passes down the river; consult with Herbert Spencer, and then set out for the North to find out for yourself what has become of Estelle. Let me tell you all that has happened at Le Bocage since that creature took possession there, and you will understand why I give implicit credence to Gumbo's statements."

Raymond made a gesture of assent, and Mrs. De Lorme went on to relate the expulsion of Zulieme, and the vague doubts which then arose in her mind, the loss of the diamonds at the time of Macon's visit, and the strange caprice to send Zelma away with him.

As she spoke, the young man recalled the loss of the ring, and the artful excuse given for it, and he felt almost convinced that he had been duped. He sat with bowed head and heaving bosom, unable to speak. At last he roused himself, took from his pocket the ring given him by Hester, and bitterly said:

"That is the substitute *she* gave me for our family ring, and when I detected the difference, and discovered the initials of Hester Blake and her lover on the inside, she accounted for the exchange so plausibly that I believed her."

Mrs. De Lorme, glancing at the letters, said:

"This will furnish you with a valid excuse. Say to Hetty that I refuse to permit the marriage to take place without the ancestral ring, and that you have set out in pursuit of it, to return as soon as you have regained it, to claim her hand."

"Thank you, mother. I see no other course open to me, and I will avail myself of that excuse for my sudden departure, poor as it seems. Let us retire now. It is long past midnight, and I feel as if I must be alone to think over what we have heard, and determine on my final course."

Raymond took the candle his mother lighted for him, and left the room, but no slumber came to him that night. It was nearly two o'clock when he retired, and at dawn he was up again, making arrangements for his immediate departure.

He shrank from the thought of seeing Hester again till his doubts were resolved, and he wrote a few hurried lines to her, stating his mother's prohibition of their public union till the crusader's ring was recovered, as all the traditions of his father's family pointed to disaster and doom to the elder son who failed to place this amulet on the finger of the wife he wedded. Raymond declared that he felt bound to go in search of it, and he asked her to furnish him with the address of Mrs. Blake, that he might return her daughter's ring and claim the one belonging to himself.

The note was sent over to Le Bocage soon after daylight, and the feelings of Hester may be better imagined than described, when she was aroused from a pleasant dream to read its contents. For a few moments she was tempted to throw up the game she had thus far so successfully played, but the image of Raymond arose before her in all his frank, manly beauty, and she vowed to herself that she would not give him up without one more struggle to retain the hold she had over him.

She arose, threw on her dressing robe, and wrote a few lines expressing tender regret, but submitting to his decision as a good wife should. She gave the address of Mrs. Blake, as furnished by Macon, at the lonely house in the vicinity of New York, and bade him God speed on his errand.

Another letter was then rapidly written to her mother, in which she sketched the programme to be carried out when De Lorme arrived, and demanded the ring; and with a man of his impulsive and generous temper, Hester believed that all doubts could be easily set at rest, if Mrs. Blake performed the part assigned her with her usual tact.

Raymond received the note before breakfast, and its frank and affectionate tenor again caused him to waver in his belief that its writer could be guilty of the deep treachery of which she was accused. But his course had been determined on, and at the appointed time he took the steamer and went on his way to find the solution to the terrible mystery that had so suddenly invaded his sunny life.

We pass over the incidents of the journey to New Orleans, the tortures suffered by De Lorme, and the amazement, doubt and even anger of Herbert Spencer when he heard Raymond's story. But the exhibition of Macon's and Hester's betrothal ring, and the exposure of Hester's duplicity in regard to it, at last convinced Herbert that she was an impostor. Marion, of course, readily believed the pretended Estelle to be Hetty Blake, and zealously seconded Raymond in his determination to unmask her and find his own beloved wife.

Herbert telegraphed to Gibbs, the detective, to hunt down Mrs. Blake, and also to keep a look-out for the arrival of Zulieme and her son, and to take them in charge when they arrived. Raymond then took a swift steamer, the *Sultana*, for Cincinnati, whence he would go to New York by railroad, where he hoped to arrive in advance of the brig in which Zulieme had embarked.

On the fifth afternoon the *Sultana* reached Louisville, and an hour later Raymond was on board the night packet bound for Cincinnati. He expected to reach that city in time to take the morning train for New York, and in two days more he would be at the end of his terrible journey.

He was about to go in to his state-room, when the steamer whistled and rounded to at a wood-yard on the Indiana shore, and a voice close beside him said:

"We shall soon pass the wreck of the Greenwood. It was but half a mile above here that she exploded. I was aboard of her."

The name of the steamer on which Macon had lost his life aroused De Lorme from his apathy, and he turned to the speaker, a short, thick-set man, with a shrewd but good-humored face, and asked:

"Can you tell me anything of a man named Macon, who got on board the Greenwood with a negro girl at a plantation in Louisiana? The papers reported both as lost, and I shall be glad to hear something further about them."

"The papers an't up to everything. The man was drowned sure enough, because he didn't know how to swim, and I saw him go down myself. Sarved him right too, for he kept that poor darkie locked up in one of the rooms, with a pair of saddle-bags of his'n, to keep guard over 'em, I suppose. I kicked the door in myself, and told her to hold on to me, and I'd save her. But afore she'd come with me, don't you think she grabbed them bags, and made me take 'em along too? I got 'em both ashore safe, and she's in that house up yonder with the bags, and she won't allow any one to open 'em to see what's in 'em."

Raymond listened to this statement with breathless interest. He hurriedly said:

"This negro girl is known to me. You don't know what a service you have unconsciously rendered me, sir. Will you go with me on shore, and show me the shortest way to the house, for I must have speech with this poor creature."

"You look like a honest youngster, and I believe you don't mean any harm to the gal; so here goes."

The stranger dived down the stairs, followed by Raymond, and after ascertaining that the steamer would be detained at least twenty minutes longer, the two commenced ascending the steep bank toward a small cottage which stood but a few yards from its edge.

The door of the house was open, and the glare of a bright fire shone on two figures standing on a small platform in front of it. One of these was a sallow-faced woman in a limp calico dress and faded shawl, and the other was a slender negro girl, with a tattered cloth cape wrapped around her. Her face had a startled, wild expression, but Raymond knew her to be Zelma as soon as his eyes fell upon her. Stepping hastily forward, he lifted his cap that she might see his face, and said:

"Don't you know me, Zelma? I have come to take you away with me, and restore you to your friends."

The girl sprang forward, fell at his feet, and clung to them, as she cried out:

"Oh, Marse Ray, is it you?—'deed *is* it you, come to find poor Zell, when I thought nobody'd ever look arter me agin? I's got 'em safe, Marse Ray—dem shiny stones what Hetty Blake gin to Dr. Makin; and now you is here, all's safe."

Paying no attention to the exclamations of the woman with whom Zelma had found refuge, Raymond simply thrust a roll of banknotes into her hand, took Zelma's saddle-bags, and followed by the girl and Snyder—the stranger—hastened to the boat, which they reached as the plank was being hauled in.

Unwilling to exhibit Zelma in her tattered condition, Raymond requested Snyder to go to his state-room, the number of which he gave him, and unbolt the door which opened upon the guard.

When the poor creature found herself in safety she wept hysterically, and for many moments was incapable of giving a connected account of the circumstances that had led to her banishment from Le Bocage. But when she could speak—when she described the interview between Macon and Hester Blake, and told all that followed it, her pale listener felt that a special providence had sent him to find her, and set all his doubts at rest concerning the identity of the specious pretender who called herself Estelle Landry.

He gathered from Zelma's statements that at the time of Macon's visit to Le Bocage his fair bride was still living, and he felt the renewed hope that he should be in time to save her from her enemies.

On opening the carpet-bag the diamonds were found safe in the box in which they had been placed. Having satisfied himself of this, Raymond then went in search of the chambermaid, and giving her money, requested her to take charge of Zelma till he reached Cincinnati, and to furnish her with a respectable suit of clothing from her own wardrobe, explaining at the same time how that of the girl had been lost.

The woman was interested, and promised to do all that was possible for her; and having thus provided for the girl's comfort, and cautioned her against referring to what she had told him that night, Raymond went in search of Snyder, who had promised to sit up for him in the gentlemen's saloon.

It was growing late, and the place was deserted, except by the man who awaited his appearance, and when De Lorme joined him, he said:

"So you're come at last. I've been a waitin' on you, hopin' that you'd tell me what was in them ere bags that critter held on to like grim death. You've found out, in course."

"Yes; I have seen the contents of the saddle-bags. The clothing in them was of course ruined; but I found something in them so valuable to a dear friend of mine, that I feel bound to pay you a handsome reward for enabling me to recover them, as well as for saving the life of that poor girl."

An arrangement was soon made that was satisfactory to Mr. Snyder, who was to take temporary charge of Zelma, and place her with respectable people in Cincinnati. The next morning Zelma submitted without reluctance to the transfer thus made, when she received the assurance from Raymond that he would return West as soon as possible, bringing with him her true mistress, if she was to be found on earth. His business with Snyder was arranged, and with renewed hope, he set out on the early morning train for New York.

CHAPTER LIV.

THE DISCOVERY.

When Raymond De Lorme reached his hotel, in New York, he found Gibbs on the watch for him, with news that almost filled him with despair.

The house occupied so brief a time by Mrs. Blake was shut up, and in spite of the detective's most strenuous efforts, he had, as yet, been unable to gain a clue to her present whereabouts. Dr. Presley had taken such good care to conceal all traces of her, for the purpose of baffling Macon on his return, that he was in danger of being missed by the one most interested in communicating with him.

"The *Eagle*," said Gibbs, "has been spoke at sea, and she will probably be in port before the day is over. I boarded the brig that brought the news, but I could learn nothing more about her."

Leaving Gibbs to watch the arrival of the *Eagle* and secure the safety of Zulieme and Gabriel, Raymond ordered a carriage to drive to Greenwood, with the full belief that he should there find a record of the burial of Estelle under the name of Hester Blake.

On reaching the gates of the cemetery, Raymond stopped a few moments to inquire if any one of the name of Hester Blake had been recently interred within its precincts. After some delay, the answer was given that the name of H. Blake was on the books, and the quarter in which the grave was to be found was indicated to the driver, who professed to be well acquainted with every portion of the cemetery.

Many persons were strolling through the grounds examining the sculptured monuments at their leisure, but Raymond gave no heed to these, till his eyes fell upon two figures walking slowly almost in a line with the carriage. The driver had checked his speed, and was looking anxiously around for the plain marble shaft which he had ascertained had been erected over the grave of the H. Blake who had been interred in Greenwood.

A girlish figure of medium height, dressed in deep mourning, walked in front, followed, a few paces behind, by a rather thick-set girl, with a vacant but good-humored face.

There was something strangely familiar to Raymond in the air and bearing of the young lady in black, and wild as the hope seemed to himself that this could be the being of whose grave he was in search, he called out to the driver:

"Open the door quick. I must speak to that lady before we go any further."

Agitated as his voice was, its tones struck familiarly on the ear which had learned to think them the music of her life, and the lady turned quickly, threw back her thick vail, and displayed the face Raymond believed shrouded in the grave.

It was indeed Estelle, more delicate, more spiritual than in other days, for she had not yet quite regained the bloom of her early years, though she was rapidly recovering from her long illness, and her mind had regained all its original clearness under the skillful treatment of Dr. Presley.

With a cry of rapture she sprang toward her lover, and was folded in his strong embrace without a word being spoken by either. Raymond was too much overcome by this sudden shock of joy to find words in which to express it, and Estelle was too happy to care to break the blissful silence that held them spellbound.

We draw a vail over the sacred joy of this meeting. The lovers soon entered the carriage and started for Estelle's residence. On the way they mutually informed each other of the vicissitudes which they had experienced, and Raymond learned that the H. Blake interred in Greenwood was Hester's mother. On arriving at the cottage, where they found Dr. Presley and Mrs. Muller, Raymond allowed no time to be wasted in idle talk, but as soon as courtesy would permit requested a private interview with the doctor.

When they were alone, Dr. Presley gave a clear statement to Raymond of all that had occurred at Blanton, and explained the means by which he had gained control of Miss Landry's fate, and eventually saved her life. He placed before the young man the letters which had been sent by Hester to her mother, and they laid bare all the turpitude of which she was ready to be guilty to secure a legal union with Raymond De Lorme, and the undisturbed possession of the fortune and position she had seized on.

These letters had been found among Mrs. Blake's papers, for she had so suddenly been struck with death that no time to destroy them was allowed her. On her tombstone might with propriety have been inscribed, "The way of transgressors is hard," for not a day of peace or hope had dawned for her since the one on which she tempted her daughter to embark upon the tortuous path which had brought death to her, and ruin to Hester. Presley ended by saying:

"Mrs. Blake kept herself in a half-dazed condition by the use of morphine, and I had little difficulty in managing her after she fell into my hands. She sent Macon south in the hope that her daughter would give up the marriage with you, and after securing the Landry diamonds, elope with him, and they would all go to Europe together. When the account of the explosion on the Ohio appeared in the papers, with Macon's name among the lost, there was every probability to her mind that Hester was his companion, and the shock killed her. She fell upon the floor, and in half an hour the rush of blood from her lungs suffocated her."

Among Mrs. Blake's papers was also found her bank-book, showing that thirty thousand dollars had been deposited to her credit in one of the principal banks in New York. This money Estelle claimed at a later day, and after setting aside the fifteen thousand dollars designed by her father as a portion for Hester, the balance she insisted on dividing equally between Presley and Mrs. Muller.

By this time the short winter day was coming to a close, and Dr. Presley went to New York to send a telegram to Herbert Spencer, and to help Gibbs look after Zulieme and her son.

The hours passed on, and it grew so late that Raymond began to think Presley would not return that night, when the gate was heard to open, and eager steps drew near the house.

"I hope that Mammy Zu, as I used to call her, is coming," exclaimed Estelle, starting up. "I have not seen her for years, but I shall know her, I am sure."

The next moment the door was thrown open, and Zulieme, looking thin and wasted from her former stately proportions, rushed to the feet of her foster-child, and sank sobbing on the floor.

"I've found you, my own, own darlin'—and that gal is knowed to be where she's no business to be. Oh, my pet, I have been so miserable! and now I am so happy that I feel as if I can never ask any more good fortune from the blessed Lord what always brings things round for the best, if we only have patience to wait on Him."

Estelle raised her from the floor, and gave her hands to the excited woman to be kissed and wept over, till Gabriel came forward, bowing respectfully, but with a beaming face.

"I is glad, Missy, to find de right mistis at las'; an' I is special glad that you knows *we* didn't take them ere things we was 'cused o' stealin'."

"It is all right now, Gabriel," said Estelle, shaking hands with him; "and all you and your mother have suffered in my cause shall be remembered by me with affectionate gratitude as long as I live."

Presley now came forward, followed by Mr. Gibbs, and from them Raymond learned that the *Eagle* had arrived in port at eight o'clock; the policeman, accompanied by the doctor, had boarded her at once, and inquired for the negroes, and had brought them as soon as possible to the cottage.

The next morning a telegram was dispatched to Snyder, requesting him to send Zelma to New York under the care of the conductor of the train, and to inform her that Gabriel should meet her on her arrival.

A few hours later a small bridal party issued from the church in which the marriage ceremony had been performed between the lovers, and stepping into a carriage that awaited them, Raymond De Lorme, his bride, and her dumb attendant, set out to take possession of the apartments which had been engaged for them at the hotel in New York.

A week from that time another wedding took place, for Gabriel and his cousin Zelma concluded to accept the freedom their young mistress offered them, and begin life together on the money given the bride by her mistress.

Zulieme refused to be left behind even with her son, and when the ship sailed out of the harbor with Raymond and his bride, she was with her mistress.

Eunice Barker also clung to Estelle, and went with her to her Southern home.

Dr. Presley was also induced to accompany them, and on his arrival he took charge of the two plantations as resident physician.

Mrs. Muller, quite satisfied with the munificent sum given her, returned to Hans, and excused her long absence by explaining to him that through her sagacity the treacherous plots of Mrs. Blake and her daughter had been circumvented.

CHAPTER LV.

HOW HESTER MET HER FATE.

On the day of his marriage Raymond wrote a long letter to his mother, circumstantially detailing all that had happened on this eventful journey, and laying down the programme he intended to follow with reference to Hester. She was to be kept in profound ignorance of all that could have given a premonitory warning of the mine about to explode beneath her feet, till she came to meet him on his return; then, in his own way, he would show her that all was known, and resistance to her fate useless.

De Lorme had written a few lines to Hester from Louisville, and from their tenor she thought herself safe to win in the hazardous game she was playing. After his meeting with Estelle, Raymond wrote again, but very briefly—merely stating that he had regained the ring, and within a month he would meet her at Le Bocage, where he preferred having their second nuptials celebrated.

Miss Lyman, with Clarice, had gone on a visit to Mrs. Spencer in New Orleans, where, after a prosperous voyage on an ocean steamer, Raymond and his party arrived in improved health and spirits, and Spencer's house was filled with jubilant voices and joyous hearts.

When Herbert found that Raymond would listen to no remonstrance in favor of sparing Hester the crushing blow that was about to be inflicted upon her, he declined witnessing it, as he very justly said that, as much as he abhorred her duplicity and lack of principle, he could not take part in her punishment, merited though it was, for she had been a good friend to him, even if she had used the means of others to assist him.

On the evening after this conversation took place, Raymond De Lorme, with his wife, Miss Lyman, Clarice, Gibbs the detective, and Zulieme, set out for Oaklands. They went on board the boat after supper, and retired at once to the state-rooms secured for them. At daylight they were landed at the plantation, and found the De Lorme carriage awaiting them. The driver was an old family servant, and to his discretion could be intrusted the secret it was important to keep from the knowledge of every one at Le Bocage.

At a later hour he was sent with a note from Raymond to Hester, informing her that he had detained Clarice to accompany him when he came over the next morning, and requested her to be in readiness to receive him in her own home precisely at eleven o'clock that morning. He would bring with him the priest, and all could be settled finally.

Hester was puzzled by the wording of his note, and she thought it very business-like to be written by a man in love, but she would not permit a doubt to intrude on her mind on that auspicious day. She summoned Sylvia, and ordered her to lay out upon her bed the robes of satin and lace which had been prepared for the occasion, and took from a velvet case a magnificent set of pearls presented to her by Herbert Spencer as a bridal gift, when she was last in New Orleans.

Any other woman would have felt how lonely and deserted she was by female friends, to have not one near her at this crisis in her life; but Hester cared little for that. She felt that she could sustain herself, and she was willing to dispense with Mrs. De Lorme's presence, though she resented the absence of that lady, and the utter neglect with which she had treated her of late.

She triumphed in the thought that she would find means to repay her, and she revelled in the belief that as her husband, Raymond would become so devoted to her that the little influence his mother possessed over him would be utterly set at naught.

When her toilet was completed, she viewed her radiant figure in the cheval glass, and rejoiced in her beauty as her most effective weapon in the warfare she meant to wage with her prospective mother-in-law. No warning fear came to tell her that her sceptre had already departed, and the sword suspended over her head was ready to fall and crush her. Her heart was filled only with exulting visions of love, ambition fulfilled, and triumphs won in the world she was so eager to dazzle by her charms, and subjugate by her subtle intellectual power.

She had ordered the parlors to be closed, and the rooms brilliantly illuminated; and a temporary altar decked with flowers from the conservatory, was placed in the central one.

Hester now swept into that apartment, and glancing around with a satisfied smile, said:

"Right royally will I welcome you, my hero and my love. Had all the world been bidden to our bridal, I could not more carefully have prepared for it. Oh, Raymond! how I love you! how I love you! and yet it seems to me you linger long. No matter; once mine, and I shall know how to wind myself so completely into your heart of heart that you will think but of me, care only for me, of all the women in this wide, wide world."

A carriage drove to the door, and Hester made a few steps forward, but she suddenly checked herself, and with a flashing smile, said:

"No, I will not meet him on the threshold; let him enter and be struck with me and my surroundings. There are no strangers to cavil at finding the bride awaiting the lord of her life and heart."

In place of Raymond, Mrs. De Lorme came in with Miss Lyman, followed closely by her two daughters. Hester thought their looks were strangely cold, but she greeted them with cordiality, and remarked with some surprise that not one of them offered to kiss her.

"Where is Ray?" she asked, with a slight tremor in her voice. "I thought he would have been with me before this time?"

"He passed into the conservatory with some friends he has brought with him to witness what is to take place here to-day," replied Mrs. De Lorme with measured intonation, and her words for the first time struck a strange chill to the bold heart of the expectant bride. She mechanically said:

"Any friends of his will be welcome."

"I hope you may find them so," was the sarcastic response.

Hester flashed an inquiring and defiant glance at her, and said:

"Of course I shall find them so. Henceforth Raymond's life and mine are to be identified, and what he estimates highly I will learn to approve; even the mother who has slighted and ill-treated me, I can tolerate for his dear sake."

Mrs. De Lorme drew herself up haughtily, and said:

"I scarcely think I shall trouble you to do that, Hetty Blake. Look! and see if you will welcome those who approach."

Half paralyzed by the sound of her own name uttered in those freezing accents, Hester turned her head in the direction of the conservatory door, to which Mrs. De Lorme now pointed. It had unclosed, and advancing slowly through the opening was a radiant figure dressed in bridal white, with brow, neck and arms decked with costly gems, that flashed in the light of the chandelier. Hester saw before her the being she had believed in her grave, and adorning her lovely person were the gems she had thought lost in the depths of the Ohio. The fair vision leaned on the arm of the man she had lately thought all her own, and behind them came Zulieme to tell the story of her wrongs, and bring home to their author disgrace and defeat in its most humiliating form.

For a moment Hester's senses reeled, and she felt as if she must faint; but she rallied all her effrontery, and like a lioness at bay, stood ready to defend herself, and if it were possible, to rend those who attacked her.

With a wild laugh, she cried out:

"Who is that? And why does she come hither on our bridal day, Raymond De Lorme, to sow dissension between us? Have you robbed the grave to bring my father's discarded daughter hither to dispute my right to you and to his fortune?"

Raymond slowly said:

"I have brought my wife to shine down the daring interloper who has attempted to assume her place. She would have spared you this ordeal, and allowed you to go without bringing home to you the bitterness of this degrading scene, but *I* would not have it so. Since circumstances forbid me to punish you in any other way, I determined that you should at least drink to the dregs the cup of humiliation my hand has prepared for you. All your baseness is known to me, Hester Blake, and if you venture to defy me, I have a man in attendance ready to arrest you for conspiring against the life that is most precious to me, and also for making away with the Landry diamonds, and accusing an innocent person of having stolen them."

Hester had grown deathly pale, but with a sneer, she haughtily replied:

"I defy you to prove your assertions, and I shall maintain that I am Estelle Landry. Have me arrested at your peril. I am not a nervous fool to be frightened at your threats. Possession is nine points of the law. I have been recognized as Armand Landry's daughter and heiress, and I am not going to resign my birthright at *your* bidding, Mr. De Lorme. No doubt you 'lay the flattering unction to your' *vanity*, which leads you to believe that I shall break my heart because I have lost *you*; but learn from me the truth, that I only valued you for the worldly advantages you possess. A verdant youth like yourself could have few attractions for a woman gifted with such beauty and intellect as are mine. I should have put my foot upon your neck, had you been true to the pledges you have given me, and made you the humblest of my slaves. As it is, I will prosecute you for bigamy, and contest to the last my right to my father's name and fortune."

Estelle left the arm of Raymond, and advancing a few steps, with an expression of angelic compassion upon her lovely face, laid her hand on that of Hester, and softly said:

"You are my father's daughter, Hester Blake; the same blood flows in our veins, therefore I forgive you all your machinations against myself. I will save you from yourself, if you will permit me to do so. Such threats as you have just uttered are but the ravings of a foiled heart, for you cannot carry them into effect. The mother whose aid you doubtless calculate on, is no more; and your own letters, exposing every step you have taken, are in Raymond's possession. Think what the result of a public investigation must be, and be warned in time."

Hester withdrew her hand from the light touch that rested upon it, and raised it menacingly; but her arm dropped suddenly, as if turned to stone, when the death of her mother was announced. She stood alone now—alone in her desolation and ruin; and the death of her mother had taken from her every chance to maintain the position she would have battled for to the last, if she could have seen the slightest chance of success. She flashed a menacing glance on the imploring face of Estelle, and bitterly said:

"Do not touch me—do not appeal to me in that hypocritical tone, when you are exulting in your heart over the triumph you have won at my expense. I hate you, and I would yet destroy you if I could gain the power to do so. You know the truth, and I will no longer deny my identity. I am Hester Blake—the daughter of the woman your father wronged, and if justice had been done to *her*, the lawful possessor of all he died possessed of. I lay down the name I have borne a few brief months, and with it the yoke that has almost goaded me beyond endurance. My Bohemian nature shall have full sway now, and should you chance to hear of Hester Blake in the future, it will not be as a poor and despised dependent on your bounty, but as a power in the world!"

She swept rapidly from the room, all moving aside to allow her to pass; but Mr. Gibbs, who had stationed himself near the door opening upon the hall, at a sign from Raymond, followed her to the door of her apartment, and as she was entering it, said, in his matter of fact tone:

"I am a detective, Miss Blake, and it is my duty to keep guard over you till I see you safely out of the country. If you will be quiet, and let things take their course, you'll be allowed to get off easy, because the family don't want to have a scandal made. Pack up your things, and be ready to go with me in two hours, and I will take you to New York as fast as steam can carry us, and put you on an English ship, to go wherever you choose when you are landed on the other side of the ocean. You will have a good income secured to you, and I must say that you have been very liberally dealt with."

Hester paused at this address, and looked the speaker over with an air of superb scorn. She coldly replied:

"Since you look like a gentleman, I am willing to be escorted by you to the place I am most anxious to get to; but beware of hinting to any one on our journey the business that brought you hither, or that I am under your surveillance. I shall have no desire to escape, for the prospect of leaving this detested country is the most agreeable that could be presented to me. I think I can rely on your discretion, sir, as you may on my pledged word to give you no cause of complaint against me while I am under your protection."

Gibbs stood aside, and Hester entered her room, and locked the door.

She had sustained herself proudly and defiantly as long as others were looking on her in her fallen state, but now that she was alone the reaction came. The depths of humiliation opened to receive her, and she grovelled in them for a brief space, feeling like one bereft of all that made life valuable.

Much as she had dared, to possess herself of fortune, it was not the loss of that which touched her most deeply; the bitter consciousness that the man she loved with all the passion of her nature had seen through and circumvented her, was the sting which goaded her almost to madness.

But amid all her anguish she did not forget the costly robes she wore, and after a few moments' indulgence of the rage and despair that struggled for mastery in her bosom, she arose, took off her jewels, and then folded away the glistening satin and lace, wisely thinking that they might yet grace a triumph, if they had witnessed a humiliation on this day.

Her race was not *yet* run nor her career ended by this first defeat. She felt strength gathering in her heart for the conflict with fate that lay before her, and long before the time named by Gibbs as the limit of her stay she had packed up all she desired to take away with her, and was ready to accompany him.

A note was sent in to her from Raymond, forbidding her to remove anything that had belonged to his wife, but granting permission to her to take all that she had purchased for herself since she came to Le Bocage. He went on briefly to explain what would be done for her, and how her income was to be paid, but only on the condition that she should for ever expatriate herself. For the sake of Estelle he had condoned the punishment she richly merited, but the future safety of that beloved one should not be endangered by permitting her to remain in the same country with her.

Hester read the missive with curling lip and flashing eyes; then she tore it into fragments, and scattered them on the floor.

She turned again to the glass, and calmly finished the arrangement of her toilet. She had heard a carriage drive up to the door, and a glance at her watch told her that the hour of departure had arrived.

The voice of Mr. Gibbs summoned her a moment later; a servant came in to take her luggage, and she walked with firm steps through the hall that she was never more to enter.

No one was visible as she passed out, but on the steps was Gumbo, looking as strong and healthy as usual, and near him stood Zulieme to witness the expulsion of the impostor they had been the means of unmasking.

They had been forbidden to speak to her, but the exultation in those two dark faces was harder to bear than all the humiliation that had gone before. Hester clenched her hands, and drew her vail closer, as she muttered:

"Wretches! If I had not been an idiot, I would have bought you up, and easily made you both a party to the deception you have been so eager to proclaim."

The carriage drove away, and Hester Blake, with her vivid beauty, her subtle intellect, and unscrupulous nature, went out into the world to win the name and fortune that should make her famous.

A few years' study made her a finished actress, and she won a European fame under the French name she assumed. In that language were her triumphs won, for her mother had taught her to speak it from infancy, and her accent was so pure that no one suspected her nationality.

Adèle Lamothe became as celebrated for her coquetries, her boundless extravagance, and her caprices, as any of her class, and as long as her beauty lasted, she had no rival in the career she had chosen; while those whose happiness she had so nearly marred became a united and happy family.

THE END.

[MISS CARLOTTA KINGSLEY, the author of the thrilling stories, "The Mystery of No. 27," and "Filippo the Bandit," will commence another story in the next number of the *Ledger*. It is entitled—

THE BROADACRES TRAGEDY;

OR,

THE IRREVOCABLE PROMISE

It is full of interest, from the opening chapter to the close.—ED. LEDGER.]

GATHERED FERN LEAVES.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

O, Autumn King! on the forest crest
Lay down when thou will its crown;
Send off, at point of thy crystal spear,
Gay leaflets to flutter down.

Thou hast painted the maple with fire fire,
Till the woods like beacons burn,
But spare, O King of the icy spear—
O, spare us the wondrous Fern!

The oak has chanted its forest psalm,
The beech-tree its idyl told,
The maple opened its inmost wills,
In hues of red and gold;

While Frost, like a cunning conjurer, has writ
In the chloe of Autumn days!
The beech stands, like a Christian saint,
Undraid amid the blaze.

We ask not there at the hands, O King!
But leave with us not a whit
Of the wondrous wealth of the lovely Fern,
That has come, with tear and smile,
Into childish hands on household hearths,
With a sigh for this and me
But a hopeful finger pointing up
Through the shadow to Liberty.

Like a lance to-day's still at Wrong,
And the Right is the victor's wing.
Tomorrow dressed like an angel's wing,
Where a mourning mother weeps.
It points today to the quiet grave
That gathers on Folly's crest;
And the Fern is the type of freedom,
To King's over a rifled nest.

By the woodland way, by forest shade,
We shall look to-day in vain;
The drooping Fern has been gathered in,
Out of keepsake, cold and rain.
Should we wish it here, when winds are cold,
And the frost is on the ice?
No, we'll hand it down to you
In to-night the book of Gold!

THE LOVERS' QUARREL.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

Of all people on earth, Milly loved *me* the best. It was the more she was engaged to.

He had come into her lonely life like some wondrous prince in the fairy tales.

In the quiet village in which they met, certain rules regulating social affairs. Meeting people were, so to speak, set apart. Parlors were given up to them without remorse together, ordinary folk sitting in stiffness or shivering in cold passages, as the case might be. Two engaged people belonged to each other. It was treason for one girl to endeavor to monopolize what was generally termed the "steady company" of any other young lady. And Arthur Heathwood was given over to Milly Hurst, as her particular and especial property, from the first day on which he was known in the village.

Even Mrs. Milly very well. It suited Arthur also. Everything went on famously. The wedding-day was set. The two lovers settled in a blissful state of ecstasy—Milly, at least, believed that all this was to last for ever. She, in her simplicity, expected no live altogether alone in the world with her Arthur, and expected that he would be content with such a state of things. They were to fill and occupy a little nest of their own, shut away from the daughter and be buried in one grove, and go to heaven together hand in hand.

When the experience of wedded life has enlightened us, even if we love, we must say to ourselves, "It is possible he may change. It is even possible that I may. And surely one of us must die and leave the other." But to least him we love, and Fate and Time and Death will be kind to us. In the sweet days of faith, in one of the sacraments of first love, it is what makes it so beautiful to look back upon, so different from anything that can ever be realized. To feel it, one must love first to those years when womanhood and childhood meet.

"Who is that bowing to you, Arthur? Is it some one bowing to me?" said Arthur.

He looked in the direction Milly indicated.

"Yes, Miss Lint," he answered. "What can bring her here? Excuse me, Milly."

So he left Milly on the little bank under the big elm where they had been sitting, and crossed the road and waited for Pru Lint to come or as with two ladies who were certainly, to Milly's eyes, very much in the way. Arthur bowed before Lint's City ladies, and Milly said to herself, "I wonder whether I shall get that air after I have been in town."

Arthur came back after his talk, and sat down beside Milly.

"Who was it, Arthur?" Milly asked him.

"I don't know what he was coming at, their house. Only a splendid, musical, and quite a belle."

"Ah!" said Milly coldly. "You never mentioned her before."

"Well I don't often think of her. Out of sight out of mind, you know."

"Then I suppose I shall very happy again. But the next evening Arthur did not stay with Milly.

"You see," he said, "I must call on the Lints. They are at the hotel, and expect it."

Do they know you are engaged?" asked Milly, in a little whisper.

"No; not as yet," said Arthur. "I shall let them guess it; I want to make you acquainted. We'll have some pleasant times together."

Then off went Arthur. He was only performing the social duties, but Milly, country bred, had her fixed opinions about the conduct of gentlemen. "He ought to have called on other ladies," she declared to herself. But after a milky hour or two, she comforted herself by saying that "as the Lints did not know about her, they might be excused, and that they would do what was right, as soon as they understood how matters really were."

A few days after this, Arthur took Milly to call on the Lints, and the mother and daughter were charmingly polite; and Arthur himself was always getting up pleasant parties, and Milly was invited to them, and Mr. Arthur Heathwood to join them.

At first, Milly liked this well enough; but soon the fact that Arthur always managed himself on these occasions as a lover should, dawned upon her mind. As her rural circle, the engaged gentlemen sat with their arms around their fiancées' waists or in their laps. They seldom spoke to any one else, and proved their devotion by being rather unwilling to attend to ladies.

Of course Arthur Heathwood was not likely to do those things, a man must be very much at his ease to know his footing there. He was constantly thinking how much sweeter and prettier Milly was than Miss Lint ever could have been, and he was quite right. But when she was a girl she was massively developed, and dressed in the most showy manner, and dressed in pure and simple taste as she was. But Benighn also understood what was proper in this new circle, as well as he did, and never guessed that she was hurt and angry and offended, because he handed her out of the boat just as he did Miss Lint, and because he called her Miss Hunt, and said, "Allow me," when he put her shawl on for her.

Milly was stupid in such matters. A wild or two would have made all right, but he never uttered them. And Milly at last made up her mind to show him how she felt to a great extent, and to do so by sitting with Miss Lint, as Arthur had engaged for the season, and near whom he always sat in church. Miss Lint and Miss Lint's mother and Miss Lint's daughter and the two girls sat side by side in the boat, Milly's golden hair and soft blonde complexion contrasting well with Miss Lint's brunette beauty. Milly's face was too round and soft to show her feelings much, and Miss Lint chattered so volubly that she could not have said anything had she desired to do so. And Milly was so stupid that she actually never believed that they were all enjoying themselves capitally.

How could he guess that the talkative belle was jealous of his little betrothed, who had captured the handsomest man of their set—

one of whom she had thought a great deal too much, considering how matters had ended—or that Milly was growing angrier at the way in which other people were occupying the time and attentions of her lover?

At first upon this day, Milly was cool, and Arthur was cool, and when, with his face all aglow, he leant over the gate, and called to her:

"Milly, the boat is ready."

"Is it?" said Milly.

"Yes, dear; come."

Milly put down her sewing, and walked toward the gate. No one else was there. She folded her arms and leant against the palings, and looked at Arthur. Arthur looked at her, also had to grip down before she could speak.

"I'm not coming, Arthur," she said, at last.

"Why, Milly?"

"Well enough" said she. "But I'm tired of it all. Everything is different from what it used to be. You don't want to be all alone with me. You care for nothing but that Miss Lint. I never saw an engaged man behave so before. I'm not coming, Arthur. Say anything to you, Miss Lint or I. And as I said, I'm tired of it; and you may go if you like. I shan't. Perhaps by day, Arthur Heathwood, I'll take your choice between those Lints and me."

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"I thought you were enjoying yourself so much," said he, "and I thought you were taken to Fanny Lint."

"Fanny Lint, indeed!" said Milly; "and I've said what I mean."

"And you will not go with me?"

"No."

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"Then don't," said Milly, coldly.

Arthur looked at her in astonishment.

Milly said nothing in reply; but when he had walked slowly away some little distance, she called him back.

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And Aunt Jemima burst into tears, but failed to catch Milly's fainting form in her arms.

A messenger had been despatched from Tom Wea sent to the hotel at once. There was no doubt about the matter. The little boat had been found among the rapids, and a hat, a coat, and other things in the boat. Mrs. Lint was in hysterics, and Mrs. and Miss Hunt and the other ladies and gentlemen had been busy dropping into the house, but it was all over. Arthur Heathwood was drowned.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

PROMETHEUS (Detroit, Mich.) says: "I have read the *Ledger* ever since my boyhood, and I am now approaching manhood. I have always looked upon it as one of our standard, but I earnestly desire light in regard to some of its teachings. When I was about fifteen years old I commenced to read the *Ledger* with interest, and received the constant full dose of pith. Her relatives were proud of me, for I had a wonderful memory, and I was the favorite nephew. Later perhaps the marriage, because I refused to accept every dollar I had for a splendid wedding. When I returned I was told in no very unkind way that there was time to make up our loss. He was wealthy, but still he was a man, and I was a boy. I was determined to show my independence, and I did so. I was determined to show my independence, and I did so. I was determined to show my independence, and I did so